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A STORY OF GROWTH BETWEEN A FATHER AND SON WHO MUST TEST THEIR STRENGTH WHEN SUDDENLY THRUST TOGETHER

SINCE YOU'RE NEVER USUALLY AROUND, YOU SHOULD BE SPENDING THIS TIME GETTING CLOSER TO EACH OTHER.
HEY NOW, SHIORI...
OH, BE QUIET
OF COURSE HE'S GONNA CRY IF YOU'RE NOT HERE!

... IS WHAT YOU TOLD ME, BUT YOU DIDN'T COME BACK

CHICHIROGUSA
[FATHER AND CHILD GRASS]

AUTHOR: TAGAWA MI

SHIORI,

WHY DID YOU

HAVE TO DIE AND LEAVE ME WITH SHIROU LIKE THIS?

CHAPTER 1:
MEDICINE SELLING PARENT AND CHILD

APRON TEXT NOTE: THE CHARACTER ON THE BOTTOM RIGHT PANEL ON TORAKICHI'S APRON IS A HIGHLY STYLIZED VERISON OF THE KANJI 薬 (KUSURI), MEANING MEDICINE IT SERVES AS THE LOGO FOR THE SHOP WHERE HE WORKS

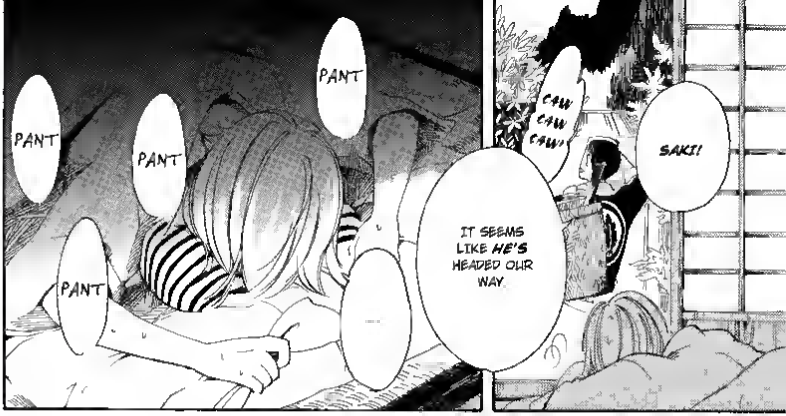
THE TEXT ON THE BOTTOM LEFT PANEL ON HIS APRON, IS THE NAME OF HIS SHOP, NANAKUSAYA

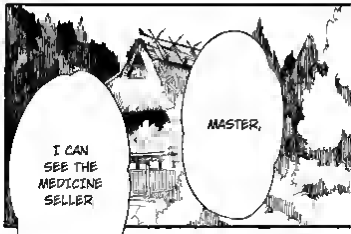
*JIZŌ WAS A BUDDHIST MONK AND BODHISATTVA. HE IS ONE OF THE PROTECTIVE DEITIES OF TRAVELERS, AND IS TRADITIONALLY BELIEVED TO BE THE PROTECTOR OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE DIED YOUNG. JIZŌ STATUES ARE COMMON IN JAPAN, ESPECIALLY ALONG ROADSIDES, AND ARE OFTEN ADORNED WITH BIBS OR TOYS, AND MADE TO LOOK CHILDLIKE (SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA)
OH, SHIROUUU.
WHAT ARE YOU...
HM?
AH, YOU'RE GIVING FLOWERS TO THE JIZŌ* STATUES, HUH?
BACKPACK SIGN NOTE THE SAME STYLIZED MEDICINE LOGO AS THE ONE ON HIS APRON
HONESTLY
YOU REALLY ARE SUCH A KIND—
!
GRAB
TWIST
LITTLE IDIOT WHO'S EXCESSIVELY POLITE TO ABSOLUTELY FREAKIN' EVERYTHING
CLENCH
NOOOO!
YOU KNOW PAPA HAS TO HURRY AHEAD AND DO HIS WORK, DON'TCHA?

OH!
YOU FOUND SOME JAPANESE VALERIAN.
THE ROOTS ARE GOOD FOR HELPING PEOPLE WHO SUFFER FROM ANXIETY OR HYSTERIA, AND...
HUH?
VALERIAN.
GRUMBLE
I'VE BEEN LATE TOO OFTEN BECAUSE OF YOU! IF YOU KEEP ME WAITING AROUND ANY LONGER...
GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE
YOU KNOW,
CHOMP
I'M A TRAVELING MEDICINE SELLER.
TOSS
AND WHO THE HECK'S ANXIETY ARE YOU TRYIN'TA CURE ANYWAY?!
!
SHOCK
WHY ARE YOU TRYIN'TA MEDICATE PEOPLE?!
YANK
NOW C'MON!
IF YOU'D JUST HURRY UP, WE WOULDN'T NEED TO TALK ABOUT THIS!

GAAAAAAH!!
...
MY LIFESTYLE IS SUCH THAT
I'M AWAY FROM MY HOME TOWN FOR ABOUT A YEAR AT A TIME, CARRYING MEDICINE TO MY CUSTOMERS
AND I'M STUCK WITH THIS LITTLE BRAT.
DAMMIT! I'M LOSING IT! COMPLETELY LOSING IT!
SINCE YOU NEVER LISTEN TO ME, WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO BACK TO YOUR SCARY GRANDMA AT HOME!
!
HUH?!
WAAAAAA

WAAA





T/N: THE NAME OF THE MEDICINE SHOP TORAKICHI WORKS AT (NANAKUSAYA) TRANSLATES GREENS AND GRASS SHOP," BUT IT SOUNDS A LOT LESS WEIRD IN JAPANESE.

I'D PLANNED ON BEING HERE SOONER, BUT...
NO, NO, NOT AT ALL.
WE'RE SORRY FOR CALLING YOU OUT IN SUCH A HURRY.
WE'RE WAY OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS, SO IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD TO GET HERE, RIGHT?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
WHETHER THE DESTINATION'S OUT IN THE MOUNTAINS OR HELL ITSELF,
IT'S OUR JOB TO GO WHEREVER MEDICINE IS NEEDED.
FOR FREQUENT CUSTOMERS LIKE YOU, I'LL THROW IN A DISCOUNT.
YOU'RE ALWAYS HELPING US OUT.
ALTHOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE YOU COULD USE A HAND YOURSELF THIS TIME.
?!

HELLO THERE, PLEASED TO MEET YOU!
SCOOT SCOOT
BRINGING A FRIEND ALONG NOW, ARE YOU?
FLINCH
HOW OLD IS HE? HE LOOKS A LITTLE ON THE YOUNG SIDE TO BE WANDERING AROUND WITH YOU
YOURS, I TAKE IT?
WELL...
BE MORE POLITE, DAMMIT!
HEY! WHAT'RE YOU HIDING FOR?!
HE'S A CUTE ONE.
WHACK
?
COUGH COUGH HACK HACK HACK HACK
WELL, YOU KNOW HOW IT IS...
...

PANT
PANT
WHILE I'M SUFFERING THIS MUCH?!
PANT
PANT
PANT
JUST HOW LONG ARE YOU PLANNING ON CHATTING...
WHAT?!
MAMA?
?
COUGH HACK
UGH.
AH SORRY
YOU SAID IT WAS BAD, BUT...
THAT'S HER, HUH?
HEY, SAKI, DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE BEING PRETTY RUDE TO TORAKICHI AFTER HE CAME ALL THIS WAY?
...

PANT
IT CERTAINLY LOOKS TERRIBLE,
THIS MORNING SICKNESS
ULP
PANT
PANT

AH, GEEZ...
BLEEEEEEEEGH
COUGH
COUGH

I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET PREGNANT FOR A WHILE NOW
THAT'S—
A FINE THING TO SAY—
IT'S A LITTLE LATE, BUT CONGRATULATIONS, SAKI

LOOK, NOW. THAT'S BECAUSE YOU SHOUTED SO LOUD...
COUGH
BLEEEGH
JUST HURRY UP AND GIVE ME A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR THIS AND GET THE HE...
ULP.
GLARE
WHAT EXACTLY ABOUT THIS DESERVES CONGRATULATIONS?!

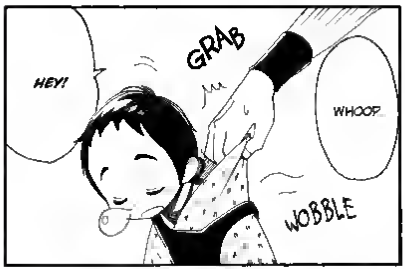
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF MORNING SICKNESS BEING THIS BAD...
FIDGET
FIDGET
WHY IS IT ONLY WE WOMEN WHO...
ULP.
CLINK
HMMM
WELL, IN THE EARLY DAYS LIKE THIS, IT'S 'CUZ YOUR LITTLE ONE IS SLEEPING IN YOUR BELLY...
YOU NEED TO TAKE IT EASY.
NOT NOW
PAPA...
FIDGET
FIDGET
GRRAAAAGH!
WHY CAN'T WE JUST DUMP MORNING SICKNESS OFF ON YOU MEN?
JUMP
OOP
YOU'RE ALL COMPLETELY USELESS!
I JUST WANNA...
GASP
GASP
AND WHAT DOES THAT USELESS HUSBAND OF MINE DO AFTER GETTING ME LIKE THIS?!
WELL, I'M HEADING OFF TO WORK NOW!
EVEN THOUGH HIS WIFE IS SUFFERING SO MUCH, HE DOESN'T SHOW THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF WORRY, THAT BASTARD...!
?!
SWELL
WELL, JUST CALM DOWN NOW

TWITCH
WHAT?
AND IT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T TAKE CARE TO AVOID THESE SHOWS OF TEMPER.
IF YOU ACTED A LITTLE MORE SWEET, HE'D BE WORRIED ABOUT YOU
FOR WHEN THE CHILD IS HERE, RIGHT?
YOUR HUSBAND IS WORKING AS HARD AS HE CAN
SFX: LEAP
CRAP...
!!
FLINCH
WHERE THE HELL'RE YOU GETTING THAT KINDA
AND WHAT THE HECK'RE YOU DO...
SLEDWAGH
GAAAAH!
YAWN...
WAAAAH!
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!
HUH?
DON'T GO FACING TOWARDS ME LIKE
WELL? HOW'S SAKI DOING?
AH.

GRIN
WELL, I'M GLAD
REALLY?
ZZZz
SHE FINALLY QUIETED DOWN AND SNORED OFF TO SLEEP
WELL,
HM?
TOSS
PINELLIA?
SWIP
PINELLIA!
YOU REALLY SAVED US COMING HERE
WHAT DID YOU USE?
THIS ONE HERE, RIGHT?
TUG
AHH
[PINELLIA]
CROW-DIPPER.
•MEDICINAL USE
ANTI-EMETIC
CROW-DIPPER. ONCE YOU DRY OUT THE RHIZOME, IT'S EFFECTIVE AS A NATURAL MEDICINE.
IT WORKS WELL AS AN ANTI-EMETIC AGENT TO STOP VOMITING AND NAUSEA.

IT CAUSES US MORE WORK AND TROUBLE EVERY YEAR WHEN IT SPROUTS IN THIS PRECIOUS FIELD OF RICE SEEDLINGS.
BUT IT'LL HELP OUT SAKI, WILL IT? I SEE
THIS PLANT

I'M JUST HARVESTING A WHOLE BUNCHA THE STUFF.
THAT'S THE ONE AND IT'S JUST AT THE RIGHT STAGE.


GRAB
HEY!
WHOOP
WOBBLE

I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO PREPARE IT PROPERLY BEFORE I LEAVE
IT'S OKAY TO DO IT MYSELF?
IF YOU JUST GIVE HER THE PINELLIA, THE TASTE IS SO BAD SHE'LL VOMIT ALL THE MORE.
YOU CAN MIX IT TOGETHER WITH GINGER OR SOMETHING TO.
菜

YEAH. THAT'D BE A BIG HELP. THANKS A LOT.
?!
HE CAN SLEEP IN THE HOUSE IF YOU WANT.
YOU STILL HAVE A FEW MORE CUSTOMERS TO VISIT AROUND HERE RIGHT?

THEY'RE NICE ENOUGH TO OFFER, AND YOU'RE TIRED, AND IT'LL ONLY BE FOR A LITTLE BIT WHILE I GO AROUND A FEW HOUSES...
WHY?
NOOO!
WAAAAAAAH!
RUB
RUB

GRAB
NO!
DON'T WANNA NAP!

WITH YOUR WIFE,
WHEN SHE WAS PREGNANT WITH HIM.
HMM?
WAS IT HARD FOR YOU AS WELL?
TCH.
WAAHH...

...I WONDER
WAS IT AS BAD AS IT IS FOR SAKI?

DURING THE TIME HER BELLY WAS SWELLING,
I WAS ALWAYS OUT AND ABOUT FOR WORK...
SNIFF
THE TRUTH IS...
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER IT.
?
I DON'T THINK IT COULD HAVE BEEN QUITE AS BAD, THOUGH
SNOOO OOORE
THUNK
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT NOW, IT MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY HARD FOR HER BEING BY HERSELF BACK THEN...

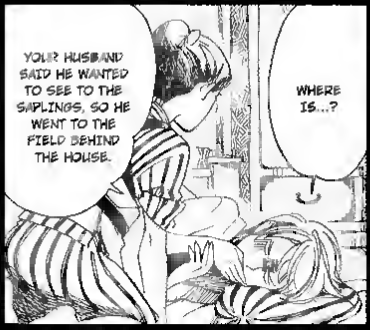
I'LL BE GOING ON AHEAD FOR A LITTLE
IEJI!
WHISTLE
RUSTLE
GRIN
HA HA
HE WAS SO TIRED HE JUST PASSED OUT
SO I'M LEAVING THE REST TO YOU!!
SHIROU'S GOING TO STAY HERE
...
TCH.
I HEARD THAT!
FWIP
COUGH.
UH,
SAKI?

YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE IT'S NOT YOUR BUSINESS...
BUT ANYWAY, LISTEN! SOMETHING PRETTY GOOD HAPPENED THIS MORNING.

YOUR MORNING SICKNESS LOOKS REALLY BAD THIS TIME.

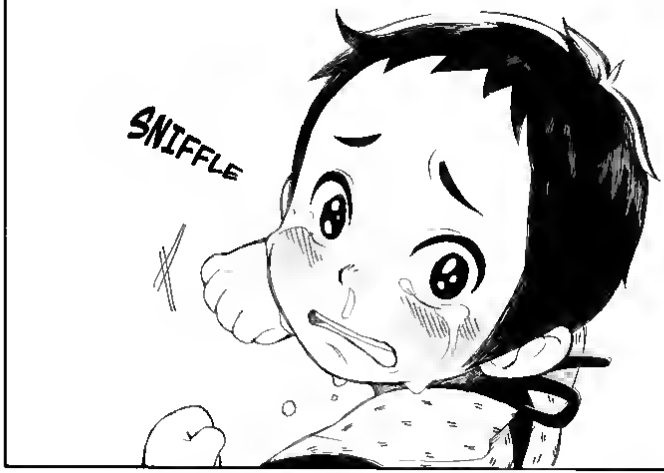
QUEN
IT'S MORNING.
ARE YOU GOING TO GET UP?
I'M... IMPOS-SIBLE.

I UNDERSTAND THAT HE HAS TO PUT EVERYTHING INTO HIS WORK.
BUT...
UUUGH.
I FEEL AWFUL.
HANG IN THERE.


YOUR HUSBAND SAID HE WANTED TO SEE TO THE SAPLINGS, SO HE WENT TO THE FIELD BEHIND THE HOUSE.
WHERE IS...?

THE HINOKI CYPRESS EVERY-ONE WRAPPED UP LAST MONTH HAS FINALLY STARTED TO GERMINATE!
YOU KNOW, IF WE TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT
GLARE
IT COULD REALLY BE A BOON TO OUR DESCENDENTS' FORTUNES.

WAAAAAAAAAAAH
WHAT?!
HUH?!
WAIH...
WELL JUST STAY GONE, YOU IDIOT!
MISTRESS, PLEASE LIE DOWN AND REST!
OUT DOING WORK INSTEAD OF SEEING TO YOUR SICK WIFE EVEN THOUGH IT'S THIS EARLY?!
WAAAAAAAAAAAH
GASP
?!
SLAM
WHO'S THERE?!
SCREAMING AND SHOUTING LIKE THIS EVEN THOUGH THERE'S A POOR SICK WOMAN IN THE NEXT ROOM, I OUGHTA...
HEY!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WAAAAAAAAAAAH!
WHOSE VOICE IS THAT?!

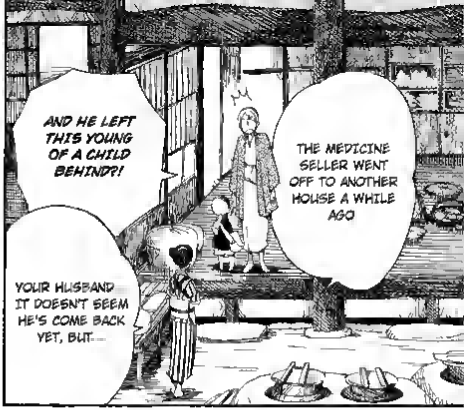

SNIFFLE

THAT MEDICINE SELLER'S KID AREN'T YOU?
YOU'RE...
WHY ARE YOU HERE BY YOURSELF?
WHERE'S YOUR DAD?
UHH
SNIFF

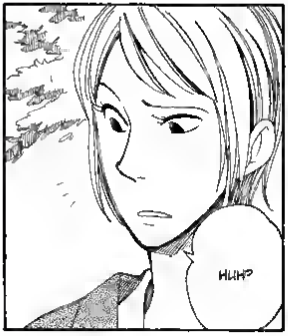
HUH?

WAAAAAAAAH!
PAPAPAAAAAAA!
YOU'RE A BOY, AIN'TCHA?!
GRAB
DON'T FRIGGIN' CRY ABOUT IT!
FLINCH
PAT
PAT
YOU'LL BE OKAY
I'LL GO TAKE A LOOK TOGETHER WITH YOU, OKAY?
SNIFF
THE MEDICINE SELLER AND YOUR HUSBAND?

TO THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT OF ME!
HON-ESTLY!


AND HE LEFT THIS YOUNG OF A CHILD BEHIND?!
THE MEDICINE SELLER WENT OFF TO ANOTHER HOUSE A WHILE AGO
YOUR HUSBAND IT DOESN'T SEEM HE'S COME BACK YET, BUT...

IT MAKES ME SO MAD!
WE'LL JUST KEEP GOING LIKE THIS UNTIL WE FIND THEM!
WHAT WERE THEY THINKING, LEAVING THE TWO OF US ALONE LIKE THIS?!


HUH?

NOT GONNA
BLEGH?

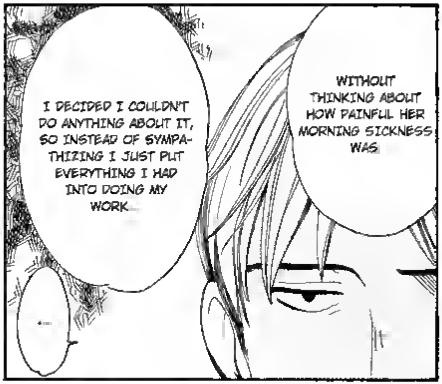
GRIN
GRIN
HE KNOWS A LOTTA MEDISHIN!
MY PAPA'S GREAT!
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I DON'T FEEL NEARLY AS BAD AS EARLIER
OH, YOU'RE ASKING IF I FEEL OKAY?
HEH HEH
JUST REMEMBERED
UHH
AW CRUD!
SNIFF
SORRY SORRY, JUST JOKING!
WELL
HE MAY BE GREAT WHEN IT COMES TO SELLING MEDICINE,
BUT HE LEFT YOU ALL ALONE, SO I'M NOT SURE ABOUT HIS PARENTING
AH!
RUSTLE
HIS WORK'S REAL HARD
SNIFF
HEY, HEY
MY PAPA
GULP

I'M OTAY
SNIFFLE
SINCE YOU'RE WIV ME
HUH?
AH
HERE Y'GO!
BLAH
INSOMNIA,
TUMOURS AND ABCESSES
HUH?!
BLAH
IT'S EFFECTIVE
BLAH
FOR CONSTIPATION,
BLAH
VIOLET!
OH, YOU'RE OFFERING FLOWERS TO THE JIZŌ STATUE?

YOU GOT A BABY
IN YOUR TUMMY
HM?
OH, WELL...
HEY, HEY,
MAMA?
WHO?!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS KID TALKIN' ABOUT?
WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT CONSTIPATION ANYWAY?
YA KNOW, EVEN WHEN YOU WERE LONELY,
YOU HAD YOUR TUMMY!
AND NOW, YA KNOW,
YOU'RE HERE WITH ME
YOU SURE ARE MATURE
HMM.
...
SO
IT'S NOT LONELY...

I...
THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THOSE GUYS WORRIED A LITTLE BIT MORE...
WHAT?
HE WENT OUT?
STOMP
EVERY SINGLE TIME, HE CAUSES TROUBLE.
TORAKICHI...
YES
SORRY ABOUT THIS...
IT WAS QUITE A WHILE AGO, WITH THE MISTRESS...
THAT KID
CAW
SAKI...
SHE'S ALWAYS THIS WAY...
DON'T WORRY.
I'M SURE I KNOW WHERE THEY'VE GONE
HUH?

WHENEVER THERE'S SOMETHING THAT DISPLEASES HER SHE JUST DISAPPEARS LIKE THIS.
HUH?!
AND
THERE'S A PLACE SHE GOES EVERY TIME AND SHE WON'T COME OUT UNTIL SOMEBODY GOES TO COLLECT HER
I SEE
SHE'S BEEN LAID UP IN BED FOR SO LONG THAT I WASN'T EXPECTING IT


WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT HOW PAINFUL HER MORNING SICKNESS WAS.
I DECIDED I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, SO INSTEAD OF SYMPATHIZING I JUST PUT EVERYTHING I HAD INTO DOING MY WORK...

I'M NOT A VERY GOOD HUSBAND.
BECAUSE I'M NOT VERY SENSITIVE, SHE'S ALWAYS GETTING MAD...
SIGH

WHY DON'T YOU JUST STICK BY YOUR WIFE'S SIDE UNTIL SHE CAN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE?
OTHERWISE

... IF THEY'RE BOTH EQUALLY USELESS,
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT'S BETTER TO BE ANNOYING...
?

HEY, SAKI!
YOU CAN COME OUT NOW. I CAME TO GET YOU
..?
THIS IS THE PLACE.
YOU MIGHT REGRET IT LATER
SAKI!
SAKI! WHAT HAPPENED?
DON'T SHAKE HER SO MUCH
HER COLOR DOESN'T LOOK SO GOOD
?!
SAKI?!
YOU'RE LATE.
WHAT TOOK YOU...
UGH.
PANT
PANT
DID YOUR MORNING SICKNESS COME BACK?

LOOKS LIKE YOUR MEDICINE ISN'T SO GREAT AFTER ALL...
IF YOU CAN STILL TALK BACK, YOU'LL BE FINE.
WHERE'S SHIROU?
HEY, SHIROU!
FORGIVE ME...
...
HE...
FOR MY SAKE...
PANT
PANT
SHIT!
DASH
HE...
THAT IDIOT...!

WHISTLE
WHISTLE
WENT OFF BY HIMSELF TO LOOK FOR SOME PINELLIA.
WHEN I STARTED TO FEEL BAD, HE GOT WORRIED, AND
RUSTLE
WHERE'S SHIROU...?!
ANSWER ME!
WHISTLE
IEJI!
BUT WHAT IF
IF IEJI ISN'T RESPONDING, IT MUST BE BECAUSE HE'S ALREADY WHEREVER SHIROU IS, RIGHT?
CALM DOWN
PANT
PANT

ANSWER ME!
SHIROU!
WHERE ARE YOU?
WHERE ARE YOU?!
PANT
PANT
RUSTLE

SHIORI...
FORGIVE ME.
CLENCH
SHIROU...!
CRUMPLE

EVEN THOUGH I'M ALWAYS SAYING
WISE-SOUNDING THINGS TO OTHERS...
PLOP
I'M SORRY...
I DIDN'T WANT HIM TO FEEL LONELY, SO I TOOK HIM WITH ME
PLOP
SHIORI...
ALL I EVER DID WAS MAKE HIM CRY,
YOU MUST BE MAD, RIGHT?
I DON'T WANT SHIROU TO BE LONELY LIKE THIS ANY MORE, SO...
I NEED YOU TO SAVE ME, SHIORI!
...!
IT'S OKAY, SHIROU
I'M BEGGING YOU...

SHIROU...
YOU AND YOUR MAMA AND PAPA
WILL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER...
YOUR MAMA'S BECOME A JIZO NOW
SINCE JIZŌ STATUES ARE EVERYWHERE, SHE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE YOU NO MATTER WHERE WE TRAVEL.
SHIROU
LISTENING TO A FOOL LIKE ME...
?!
WHOOSH
WHACK!
SHIROU!
ANSWER ME!
SHIROU!
ARE YOU NEARBY?!

!
CAW
CAW
CAW
IBJI?!
CAW
RUSTLE
SNIFF SNIFF
HM?
SHIROU?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE
SLIP

OOOWWW...
?!
LIFT
THUD
PAPA!

HOW IN THE HELL DID YOU EVEN GET UP THERE?!
UP THERE.
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU
YOU'RE NOT HURT...
SHIROU!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
YOU KNOW,
HUH?
BUT.
EVEN BY MYSELF, I DIDN'T CRY
I WAS HELPING PAPA
YOU IDIOT!
IF IEJI HADN'T FOUND YOU..
HUHH
DRIP
DRIP
RIGHT?
NEXT TIME...
I CAN GO WITH YOU, RIGHT, PAPA?
SO...

GRAB
WAAAAH
WAAAAH
WAAAAH
I'M SORRY
I'M SORRY, SHIROU
YOU MUST HAVE BEEN LONELY, HUH?
I'M SORRY

AFTER ALL, SOMEBODY JUST RAN OFF STRAIGHT AWAY LAST TIME.
...!
FWIP
NOPE.
GROAN
PLEASE GIVE ME THE MEDICINE!
COULD YOU SAY IT ONE MORE TIME?
I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING THAT SOUNDED QUITE MEEK, BUT...?
OH?
WHAT?
I, I'M SORRY, BUT I WAS SO LONELY
CAW
STOMP
TODAY I'M GOING TO STAY HERE ALL DAY, JUST FOR YOU
HA HA HA
SH... SHUT UP!
GRRAAAGH!
YOU'RE SO GODDAMN AGGRAVATING! GO DO YOUR WORK! JUST... LEAVE THE MEDICINE...
UGH.

T/N: THE NAME OF THIS PLANT IN JAPANESE IS HAHAKOGUSA, OR "MOTHER AND CHILD GRASS." IT'S IN THE SAME GENUS AS THE PLANT THE MANGA TAKES ITS NAME FROM, CHICHIKOGUSA, OR "FATHER AND CHILD GRASS."

YOUR...
HA HA HA
IS LAUGHING PROPERLY.
NO. OUR SHIROU
ALTHOUGH THEY'RE STILL AWKWARD, THE FATHER AND SON GREW SLIGHTLY CLOSER
◂◂◂ To be continued
2/15

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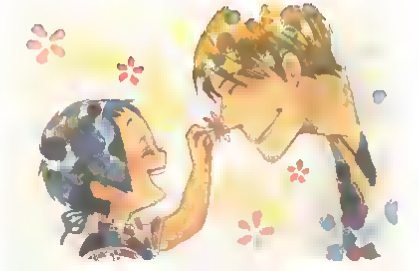


WAAAAAAAAH
WAAAAH
AAAAAAAAA
AAAAAAAAA
WAAAAAH!!
WAAAH!
GASP

CHAPTER 2:
TRAVEL AND NIGHT-CRYING

SHOCK
WAAAAH!
UH. AH.
?!
AH. UH.
WAAAAH!
WAAAAH!
AGAIN...?
DISHEARTENED
ANYWAY,
YOU HAVE TO GIVE ME SOME SORT OF STIMULANT THAT HELPS PEOPLE STAY AWAKE!
NOD
BITE
JAB
THE MASTER GETS VERY DISTRAUGHT WHEN HE CAN'T COMPLETE HIS WORK...
NANAKUSAYA MEDICINE SHOP
T/N: ALL THE SIGNS EITHER SAY MEDICINE OR THE SHOP'S NAME.

THANK YOU!
TAKE THOSE IN THE EVENING, AND YOU SHOULD BE FINE.
YOU'VE REALLY HELPED US OUT AND MASTER FUJIMIN AS WELL!

RIGHT-HAND SIGN: NANAKUSAYA

SORRY FOR PUTTING YOU TO WORK LIKE THAT, TORAKICHI.
MEDICINE TO WAKE YOU UP, HUH...?
I MIGHT NEED SOME OF THAT MYSELF.
HEY, BE CAREFUL.

SIGN ABOVE THE DOOR SAYS SOMETHING LIKE "AFTER YOU SEE US, YOU'LL TRUST US." THIS SLOGAN WAS ACTUALLY USED BY MEDICINE SELLING SHOPS IN TOYAMA CITY, THE HISTORICAL LOCATION IN WHICH CHICHIKOGUSA IS PRESUMABLY BASED. FOR MORE ON TOYAMA CITY AND HISTORICAL MEDICINE-SELLERS, SEE HTTP://BIT.LY/18HLVXO

SIGNS ABOVE OWNER'S HEAD: FAST ACTING PILL AND AMAZING RELIEF FOR HEADACHES AND TOOTHACHES!

AH, ARE YOU WORRYING ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS? ONCE YOU'RE OVER THIRTY, YOU'LL DEFINITELY REGRET THAT!
LATELY I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SLEEP AT ALL
REALLY? ARE YOU OKAY?

IT MUST BE TERRIBLE FOR YOU TRAVELING WITH THAT LITTLE ONE AND ON TOP OF THAT, YOU COVER QUITE A LOT OF GROUND TOO
WHY DON'T WE ASK SOME OF YOUR COL-LEAGUES TO HELP OUT A LITTLE?
NO, I'M DOING OKAY.
I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN VISITING YOUR REGU-LARS. BUT YOU AREN'T FALLING BEHIND ON YOUR SCHED-ULE, ARE YOU?

WE SINGLE TYPES HAVE A LOT OF STUFF TO DO TOO, YOU KNOW?!
BUT I ALREADY HAVE MY PRETTY LITTLE HANDS FULL WITH MY WORK.
WEELL, I WAAAANT TO HELP.
I'M SOOO SORRY!
PAT
...

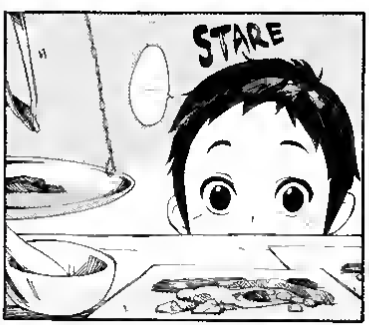
I'D HOPE YOU CAN ALL HELP EACH OTHER OUT AT LEAST IN THAT SITU-ATION...
AH!
THUD
WHACK
TCH
OW!
I WOULDN'T ASK THE TWO OF YOU FOR ANYTHING EVEN IF I WAS DYING, ANYWAY.

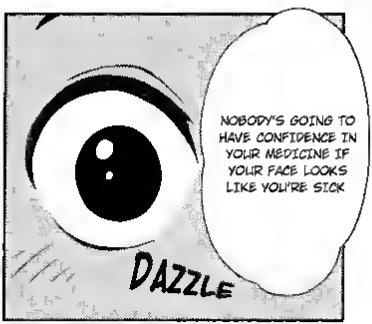
SIGN: AMAZING RELIEF FOR HEADACHES AND TOOTHACHES!

THERE'S JUST NO WAY I CAN ASK THEM FOR HELP

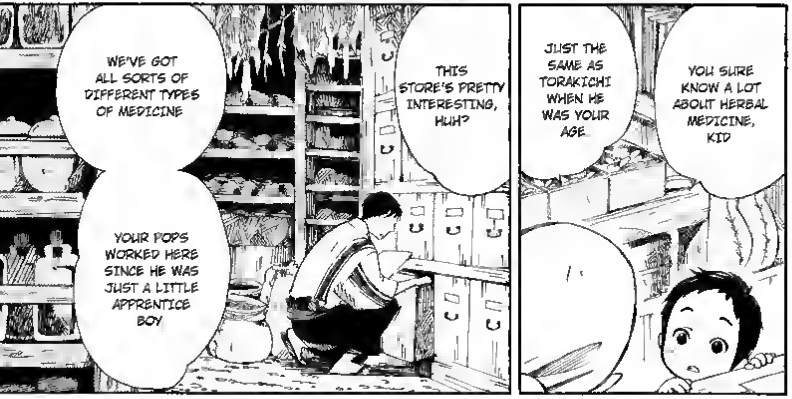
ANYWAY, I'M OKAY
EVEN WITH SHIROU FOLLOWING ME AROUND, I CAN DO MY WORK PROPERLY
CAN YOU
LOOK THE OTHER WAY FOR JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER?

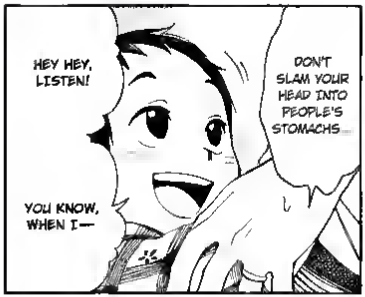
WELL, THAT'S OKAY WITH ME I GUESS.
BUT, TORAKICHI,
DON'T DRIVE YOURSELF INTO A CORNER


STARE


NOBODY'S GOING TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR MEDICINE IF YOUR FACE LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE SICK
DAZZLE

FOOTNOTE: "DRAGON BONE" (FOSSILIZED ANIMAL BONES) IS USED IN CHINESE MEDICINE.


WE'VE GOT ALL SORTS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDICINE
THIS STORE'S PRETTY INTERESTING, HUH?
YOUR POPS WORKED HERE SINCE HE WAS JUST A LITTLE APPRENTICE BOY
JUST THE SAME AS TORAKICHI WHEN HE WAS YOUR AGE.
YOU SURE KNOW A LOT ABOUT HERBAL MEDICINE, KID

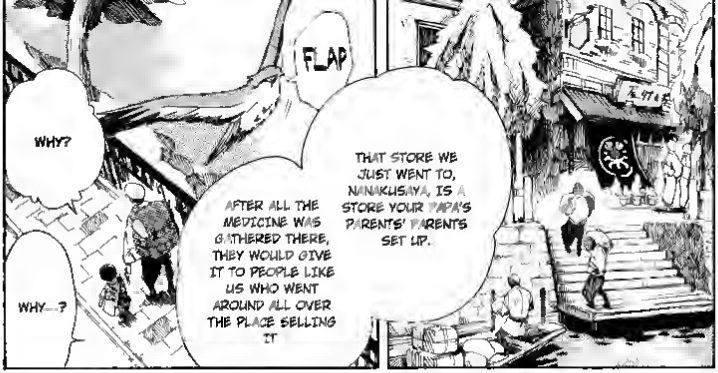

HEY HEY, LISTEN!
DON'T SLAM YOUR HEAD INTO PEOPLE'S STOMACHS...
YOU KNOW, WHEN I—

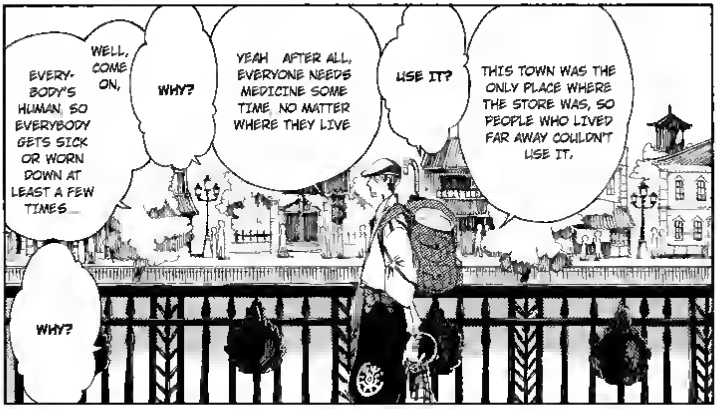
PAPA!
THUD
UGH.

IT'S ALL READY TO GO.
KAJI, ABOUT THAT MEDICINE I ASKED FOR...
TELL ME IN A BIT OKAY?
THANKS. SORRY FOR PUTTING YOU TO THE TROUBLE

YEAH!
GRIN

NOW THEN, WE'LL GET GOING SHALL WE,
OKAY.
SHIROU?
PAT


FLAP
WHY?
WHY...?
AFTER ALL THE MEDICINE WAS GATHERED THERE, THEY WOULD GIVE IT TO PEOPLE LIKE US WHO WENT AROUND ALL OVER THE PLACE SELLING IT
THAT STORE WE JUST WENT TO, NANAKUSAYA, IS A STORE YOUR PAPA'S PARENTS' PARENTS SET UP.

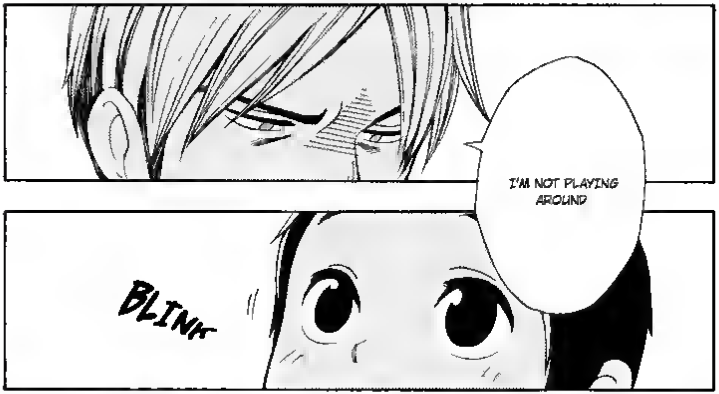

WELL, COME ON,
EVERY-BODY'S HUMAN, SO EVERYBODY GETS SICK OR WORN DOWN AT LEAST A FEW TIMES...
WHY?
WHY?
YEAH AFTER ALL, EVERYONE NEEDS MEDICINE SOME TIME, NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE
USE IT?
THIS TOWN WAS THE ONLY PLACE WHERE THE STORE WAS, SO PEOPLE WHO LIVED FAR AWAY COULDN'T USE IT.

NOW THEN...

HA HA HA
WHY?
JUST TAKE MY ANSWER AS IT IS FOR ONCE!
BE-CAUSE
ALL THAT "WHY, WHY." CRAP...
AH, GEEZ, YOU'RE TICKING ME OFF!

LANTERN SIGN' INN

WANT MEDISHIN!
PAPA'S CUSTOMER!
YAY!
THAT'S RIGHT.


I'M NOT PLAYING AROUND
BLINK

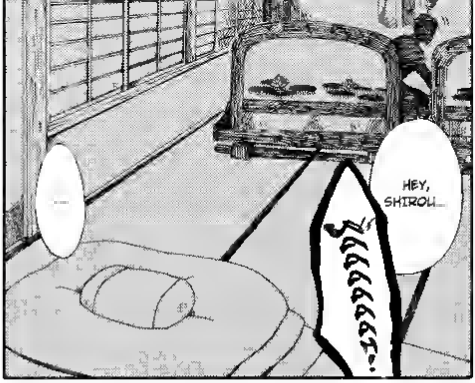
?
THE PAST FEW DAYS YOU'VE WOKEN UP SCREAMING AND CRYING EVERY NIGHT, RIGHT?
LATELY, YOU'VE BEEN WAKING UP CRYING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT A LOT. HUH?
SHIROU...

BESIDES THAT, I CAN'T SLEEP.
HAVE YOU BEEN HAVING NIGHTMARES?
I KNOW THIS NIGHT CRYING IS SOME KINDA PHASE ALL KIDS AND BABIES GO THROUGH,
BUT IT'S UNHEALTHY NOT TO SLEEP AT ALL.
LIM
NOT KNOWING THE CAUSE OF IT MAKES THIS HARD
LIM IT'S,
PAPA, YOU GET EATEN BY GIANT EEJI*!
AAAAH!
YEAH!
HA HA HA!
DON'T JOKE AROUND!
AND WHAT KINDA WEIRD DREAM IS THAT?!
WELL, ANYWAY...
FOR TONIGHT, LET'S HAVE YOU TRY THIS MEDICINE HERE
OFFER
NOW'S NOT THE TIME
OH AND LISTEN! TODAY, SHI—
WAVE

TN: HE MEANS "EEJI," THE HAWK TORAKICHI CARRIES WITH HIM.

[JUJUBE]
NATSUME
•MEDICINAL USE: NOURISHMENT, STAMINA
HELPS WITH SLEEPLESSNESS, ETC
JUJUBE HAS A DAMPENING EFFECT ON ENERGY LEVELS SO IT'S GOOD FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN'T SLEEP AND KIDS WHO WAKE UP CRYING.
"JUJUBE"?
IT'S GOT NATSUME IN IT.
YEAH.
SO IT'S GOOD FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN'T SLEEP 'N' KIDS WHO WAKE UP CRYIN'...
JUJUBE HAS DAMPING 'FECT ON ENERGY LEVELS,
BLAH
BLAH
I MIXED IN SOME LICORICE, SO IT SHOULD BE PRETTY SWEET AND EASY TO DRINK.
I HAD THEM MAKE IT AT THE STORE EARLIER
AAAHH!
BAM
LICKORISH'S IN IT SO IT'S SWEET AND YUMMY!

?!
S, SORRY
HEE HEE
...
C'MERE!
YOU'RE THE ONE DRINK-ING THE STUFF!
EEEEEE!
DON'T SCREW AROUND, DAMMIT!
COUGH COUGH
FLUMP
UH...
...
Z Z Z Z
Z Z Z Z
NO GOOD, HUH?
GASP
AAAAAA...
AAAAAA...
AAAAAA...

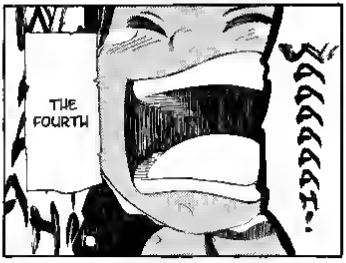

HEY, SHIROU...
...
TTTTTTT!

WELL, I DIDN'T EXPECT TO GET IT RIGHT FIRST TIME
BUT THE GUY OVER THERE'S GONNA WAKE UP LIKE THIS..

A WEEK PASSES...
I'M GONNA DIE...
YOUR COLOR DOESN'T LOOK TOO GOOD

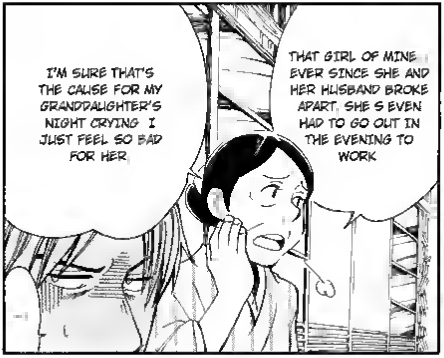
AND THEN, THE SECOND NIGHT
WAAAAH!
TTTTTTT!

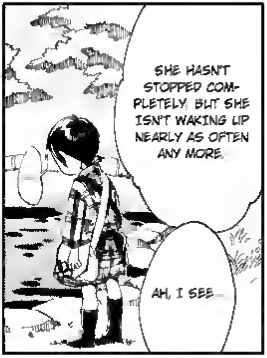
AND THE THIRD
...
TTTT!


THE FOURTH
TTTTTTT!

AH, YOUR GRAND-DAUGHTER'S NIGHT CRYING...
SO THAT MEDICINE WORKED?!
MY DAUGHTER IS SO HAPPY THAT SHE CAN RELAX AT NIGHT AGAIN NOW!
ANYWAY, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEFORE

HA HA.. I ALWAYS HAVE SOME AT HAND IF NEED BE
SHOULDN'T YOU BE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT KIND OF MEDI-CINE YOU NEED YOURSELF?


I'M SURE THAT'S THE CAUSE FOR MY GRANDDAUGHTER'S NIGHT CRYING. I JUST FEEL SO BAD FOR HER.
THAT GIRL OF MINE EVER SINCE SHE AND HER HUSBAND BROKE APART, SHE'S EVEN HAD TO GO OUT IN THE EVENING TO WORK.


SHE HASN'T STOPPED COM-PLETELY, BUT SHE ISN'T WAKING UP NEARLY AS OFTEN ANY MORE.
AH, I SEE...

NO, NOT AT ALL!
?
SLIP

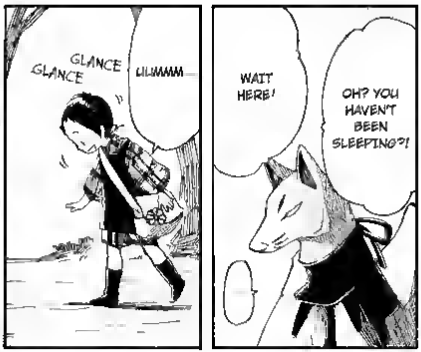
HUH?!
DON'T YOU EVER HAVE THIS KIND OF PROBLEM?
JUMP

MY BOY SLEEPS STRAIGHT THROUGH UNTIL MORNING AS SOON AS HE LIES DOWN
HA HA

MEDISHIN! MEDISHIN!
GOT ALL SUPPL'MINTS!
HE'S JUST FINE DURING THE DAY, THOUGH...

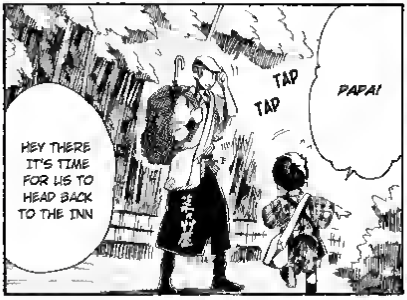
IT'S A HUGE PROBLEM
WHAT A LIE
CAW
SIGH

MUT-TER
MUT-TER


GLANCE GLANCE
HMMMM
WAIT HERE!
OH? YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING?!

I HAVE TO GIVE FORM TO IT NOW, NOW...!!
MUTTER MUTTER

YES, THIS IS IT.
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
I'VE GOT IT...!


PAPA!
TAP TAP
HEY THERE IT'S TIME FOR US TO HEAD BACK TO THE INN

ZZZZZ

HEY, HEY, OVER THERE!!
I CAN STILL HEAR YOU SCREAMING FROM LAST NIGHT.
STAY QUIET FOR A WHILE OKAY?

CAW
FLUTTER
AH, YOU!
SIGH
AND BESIDES THAT, THIS MEDICINE WORKED FINE ON THAT OTHER GIRL
HE DOESN'T HAVE A FEVER.
FLAP FLAP
A LETTER?
DON'T TELL ME YOU WENT ALL THE WAY UP TO MY ELDER SISTER'S PLACE...
CAW
WHERE THE HECK'VE YOU BEEN, IBJI!
SHAKE
EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN SUFFERING THIS MUCH, YOU
WHAT A PAIN... FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU SHE SAYS
...UUUH
CLENCH
TORAKICHI,
WHERE ARE YOU? I KNOW YOU ONLY JUST WENT OFF WITH SHIROU, BUT FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU, DRAGGING HIM AROUND WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE. BRING HIM BACK STRAIGHT AWAY
PLEASE RESPOND QUICKLY,
SIS

WAAH.
WA—
SNIFF.
AAAAAH,
RUB
RUB
DAMN IT!
WHAT IS WITH YOU?! EVERY NIGHT,
YOU JUST CRY AND CRY!
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME?!
WHY DON'T YOU JUST TRY SAYING WHAT YOU MEAN?!
HUH?!

FOR HIM TO BE CRYING LIKE THIS EVERY NIGHT, IT HAS TO BE SOMETHING I'VE DONE, BUT...
WHAT HAPPENED...?
WAAAH.
WAAA

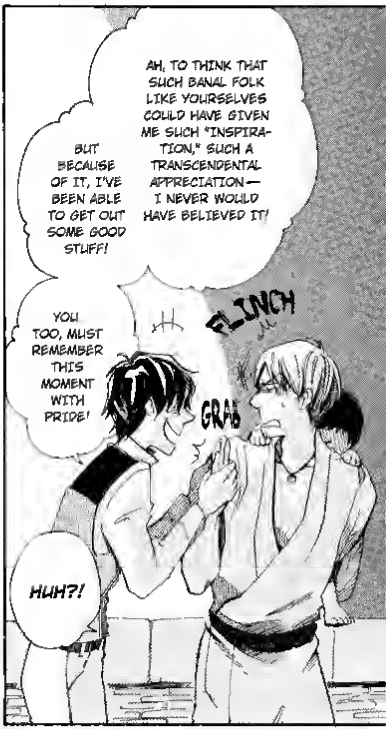
I LEFT SHIROU ALL BY HIMSELF
AFTER SHIORI DIED,
WAAAAH...
AT MY SISTER'S PLACE FOR TWO YEARS WITHOUT GOING BACK...
...

BUT THEN,
SHIROU MUST HAVE FELT LIKE I ABANDONED HIM, AND HAD IT CARVED INTO HIS HEART.
THAT MUST BE WHY HE CRIES SO SCARED DURING THE NIGHT NOW, TOO...
SHIROU...

IT WASN'T BECAUSE OF WORK, EITHER
I JUST RAN AWAY, ALONE, BECAUSE SHIORI HAD DIED.

SNIFF
HIC
OKAY...?
PLEASE...
I'M SORRY, SO DON'T CRY...
HUG
I'M SO SORRY..
SIGH...
WAA...
WAAH...
SHIORI
WHAT THE HELL?
HA HA HA!
THE WHOLE TOWN HAS BEEN OVERCOME WITH A RICH ULTRAMARINE THE COLOR OF THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN AND ALL IS STILL AS DEATH, BUT EVEN SO, MY RAPIDLY BEATING HEART IS OVERFLOWING WITH THE EXCITEMENT AND PASSION OF A SMALL CHILD!
YOU ARE WONDERFUL TONIGHT AS WELL, MR MOON!
I'M A COMPLETELY LOUSY FATHER
!
HA HA!
FLINCH

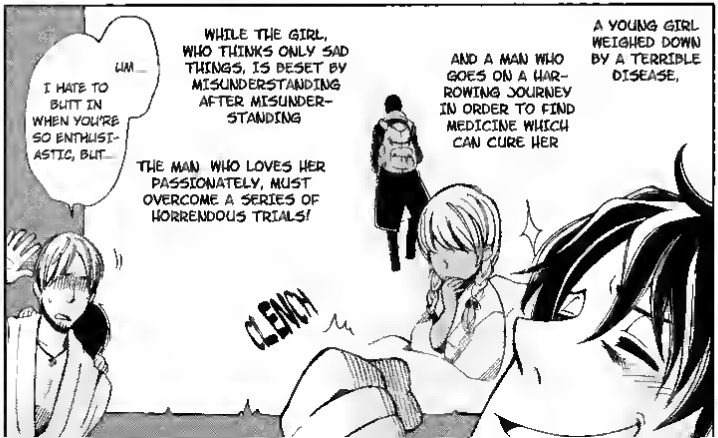
THE GENIUS PLAYWRIGHT WHOSE WORKS ARE THE HEIGHT OF POPULARITY RIGHT NOW...
RECEIVE IT WITH FRANKNESS.
YOU HAVE THE GREAT GOOD FORTUNE TO BE DIRECTLY THANKED BY ARASHINO FUUMIN,

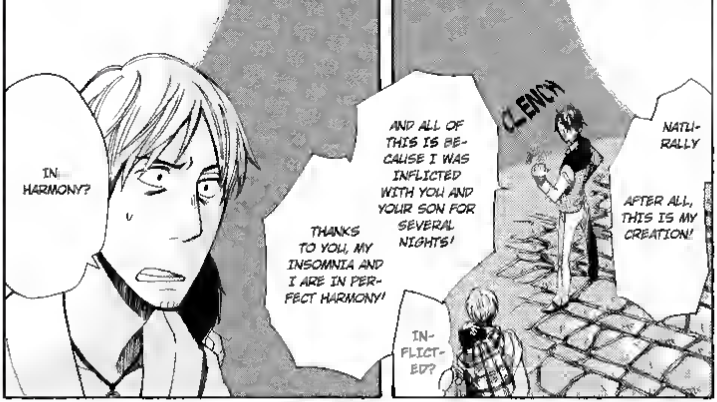

AH, TO THINK THAT SUCH BANAL FOLK LIKE YOURSELVES COULD HAVE GIVEN ME SUCH "INSPIRATION," SUCH A TRANSCENDENTAL APPRECIATION— I NEVER WOULD HAVE BELIEVED IT!
BUT BECAUSE OF IT, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO GET OUT SOME GOOD STUFF!
YOU TOO, MUST REMEMBER THIS MOMENT WITH PRIDE!
FLINCH
GRAB
HUH?!

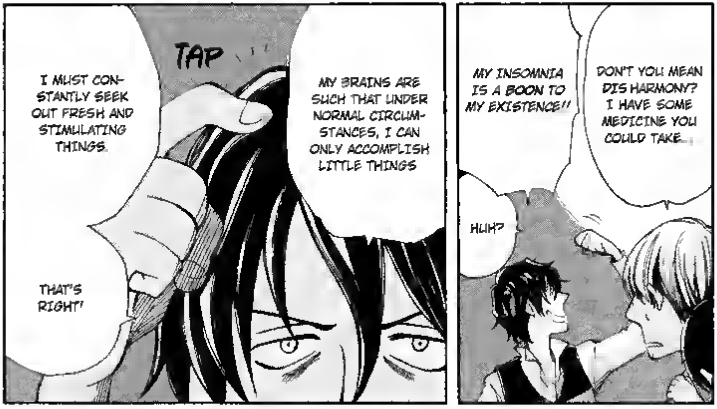
TN- SADLY, NOT A REAL PERSON.

AAAH...
BUT THE FUUMIN WHO SLEPT SOUNDLY EVERY NIGHT SIMPLY WAS NOT THE FUUMIN WHO PRODUCED GREAT WORKS!
I TRIED TAKING MEDICINE TO STAY AWAKE, BUT THE EFFECTS OF EVEN THAT WERE EPHEMERAL!
I SIMPLY COULD NOT THINK UP A PLOT FOR MY LATEST WORK
TO BE HONEST, THE PAST MONTH HAS BEEN A VERY HELL!
FUU MIN?
SO I THREW DOWN EVERY-THING AND SET OUT ON A JOURNEY...

JUST WHEN I HAD RESIGNED MYSELF TO DEATH, I ENCOUN-TERED YOU IN THAT INN!
IT WAS THE BIRTH OF A BRILLIANT "IDEA"!
JAB
JUN.
HEAVEN HAD NOT ABANDONED ME!
HOWEVER!


UM...
I HATE TO BUTT IN WHEN YOU'RE SO ENTHUSI-ASTIC, BUT...
WHILE THE GIRL, WHO THINKS ONLY SAD THINGS, IS BESET BY MISUNDERSTANDING AFTER MISUNDER-STANDING
THE MAN WHO LOVES HER PASSIONATELY, MUST OVERCOME A SERIES OF HORRENDOUS TRIALS!
AND A MAN WHO GOES ON A HAR-ROWING JOURNEY IN ORDER TO FIND MEDICINE WHICH CAN CURE HER
A YOUNG GIRL WEIGHED DOWN BY A TERRIBLE DISEASE,
CLENCH


IN HARMONY?
THANKS TO YOU, MY INSOMNIA AND I ARE IN PERFECT HARMONY!
AND ALL OF THIS IS BECAUSE I WAS INFLICTED WITH YOU AND YOUR SON FOR SEVERAL NIGHTS!
CLENCH
NATURALLY
AFTER ALL, THIS IS MY CREATION!
INFLICTED?


I MUST CONSTANTLY SEEK OUT FRESH AND STIMULATING THINGS.
TAP
MY BRAINS ARE SUCH THAT UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, I CAN ONLY ACCOMPLISH LITTLE THINGS
THAT'S RIGHT!
MY INSOMNIA IS A BOON TO MY EXISTENCE!!
DON'T YOU MEAN DIS HARMONY? I HAVE SOME MEDICINE YOU COULD TAKE...
HUH?

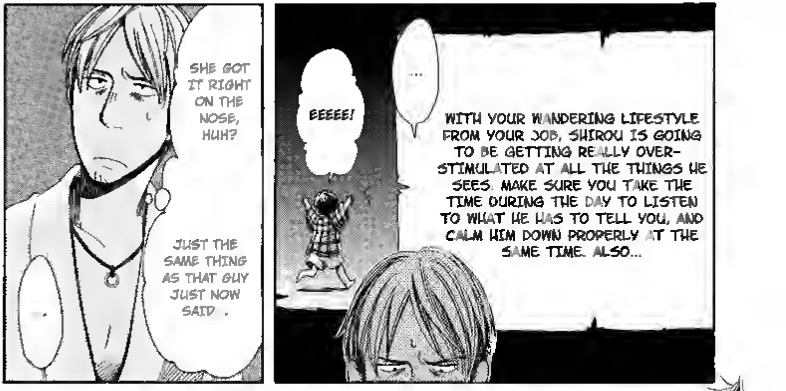
...?
ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN!
JAB
I AM JUST LIKE A CHILD, WHO ALWAYS SEEKS OUT FUN AND INTERESTING EXPERIENCES!

HEH! HEH!
IT IS DURING THIS TIME OF SLEEPLESSNESS THAT I AM ABLE TO WRITE MY WORKS
IF THE INFORMATION IS TOO NEW, OR TOO STRONG OF A STIMULUS, THEN YOU CANNOT SLEEP WELL
THE HUMAN BRAIN USES THE TIME WHEN YOU ARE ASLEEP TO SORT THROUGH NEW INFORMATION
HOWEVER,
AFTER I'VE COMPLETED SOMETHING, I SLEEP LIKE A LOG FOR DAYS.
IT IS ONLY WHEN I AM WRITING THAT I NEED MY BRAIN'S FULL POWER.
SO... YOU DON'T SLEEP AT ALL?
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
OH, RIGHT.
MEDICINE-SELLING MAN!
AH,
HEY.
I SIMPLY WANTED TO MAKE A FEW BRIEF REMARKS TO YOU!
SPIN
NOW I MUST BE OFF. I STILL HAVE MORE WORK TO DO
I PRAY YOU EXCUSE ME!

I DOUBT THAT YOUR SON THERE CRIES LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME, RIGHT?
IT'S SURELY JUST WHEN YOU'RE ON YOUR TRAVELS THAT THE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION HE RECEIVES IS TOO MUCH TO PROCESS!
HIS NIGHT CRYING IS A GOOD THING!
YOU JUST NEED TO GIVE HIM LOTS OF TIME TO SORT IT ALL OUT!

MMM...
HE MUST HAVE BEEN THE GUY SHARING OUR ROOM...
AAH!
JUST NOW REMEMBERED
WHAT'S UP WITH HIM...
HEY, LET'S GO BACK AND SLEEP...
WOBBLE
HEEEYYYY SHIRO...
EEEEEE!
HE'S COMPLETELY AWAKE
HA HA HA!
WHAT EXACTLY IS HE SAYING I NEED TO DO...?
SMACK
OW!
HIS NIGHT CRYING IS A GOOD THING...? HE JUST NEEDS TO PROCESS INFORMATION, OR SOME...

ONE MORE THING
UGH. ANOTHER LETTER FROM MY SISTER, HUH?
...
LIFT
FLIP
THAT HURT!
WHAT ARE YOU STILL UP FOR?
HM...?


SHE GOT IT RIGHT ON THE NOSE, HUH?
JUST THE SAME THING AS THAT GUY JUST NOW SAID .
...
EEEEE!
WITH YOUR WANDERING LIFESTYLE FROM YOUR JOB, SHIROU IS GOING TO BE GETTING REALLY OVER-STIMULATED AT ALL THE THINGS HE SEES. MAKE SURE YOU TAKE THE TIME DURING THE DAY TO LISTEN TO WHAT HE HAS TO TELL YOU, AND CALM HIM DOWN PROPERLY AT THE SAME TIME. ALSO...

THAT'S WHY HE'S SO EXCITABLE ALL DAY, TOO.
IT'S BECAUSE SHIROU IS SEEING NOTHING BUT NEW THINGS EVERY DAY
IT'S BECAUSE I HAVEN'T TAKEN THE TIME DURING THE DAY TO CALM HIM DOWN THAT HE'S LIKE THAT AT NIGHT .
SO THAT'S IT
NOT NOW
HEY HEY, PAPA, HEY.

I'M GOING TO LISTEN TO EVERY-THING YOU HAVE TO SAY FROM NOW ON,
SO
YOU KNOW,
TRAVELING AROUND EVERY DAY LIKE THIS MUST MAKE IT HARD FOR YOU TO RELAX,
IF I LISTEN MORE TO WHAT HE HAS TO SAY
SHIROU...
I, I,
WHEN I GET BIG I'M GONNA SELL MEDISHIN!
AND, AND, GONNA ALWAYS GO WITH YOU, PAPA!
OH, HEY, HEY
PAPA, LISTEN!

IT'S OKAY, RIGHT?!
YOU...
WHY DON'T
YOU TELL YOUR PAPA MORE ABOUT IT, HUH...?

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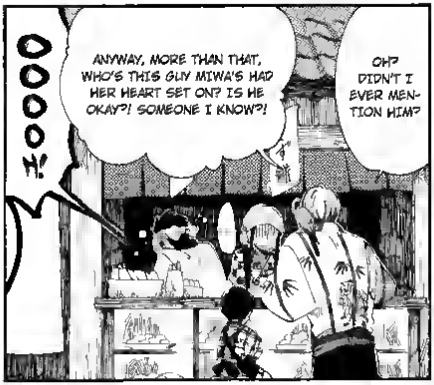
SPRING
IT'S THE SEASON WHEN JAPANESE MUGWORT BLOOMS
RUSTLE
IT'S ALSO A PRECIOUS TIME, BECAUSE HE VISITS...
CRACK
?!
PLOP
PLOP
MIWA!
RUSTLE
CAW
CAW
CAW!
BUT THIS YEAR,

CHICHIROGUSA
[FATHER AND CHILD GRASS]
AUTHOR: TAGAWA MI

CHAPTER 3:
THINKING OF YOU AND NOSEBLEEDS

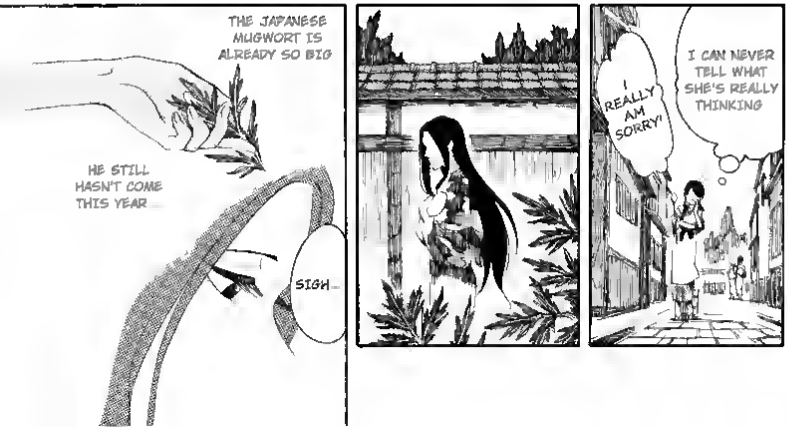
MIWA HAD A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL, HUH?
OH,
福子菓
OUTSIDE BANNER KUZUMOCHI
ENTRY PANELS FUKU
SHOP SIGN FUKU CONFECTIONERS" ("FUKU" LITERALLY MEANS "GOOD FORTUNE." THIS IS A STORE THAT SELLS TRADITIONAL JAPANESE SWEETS SUCH AS MOCHI OR RED BEAN BUNS)
HANGING BANNER KUZUMOCHI" (STICKY RICE CAKES MADE FROM KUDZU STARCH, AND TYPICALLY SERVED TOPPED WITH BLACK SUGAR SYRUP AND ROASTED SOYBEAN FLOUR)
HANGING BANNER MINAZUKI" (TRIANGLES OF SWEET RICE JELLY TOPPED WITH ADZUKI BEANS, TYPICALLY EATEN IN THE SIXTH LUNAR MONTH, ALSO CALLED MINAZUKI)
UH, WHAT IS IT?
I GUESS SINCE I CAME SO LATE THIS YEAR I WON'T HAVE A CHANCE TO EAT WITH HER...
WELL IT'S TOO BAD I PROBABLY WON'T NEED TO DELIVER ANY MORE MEDICINE TO HER ONCE SHE'S A BRIDE
AND THE OTHER PARTY KNOWS ABOUT HER CONSTITUTION, RIGHT?
THAT'S GREAT GOOD FOR HER!
UM...
FIDGET
WE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT EITHER...
OH? I DON'T REMEMBER ANYONE LIKE THAT...
THAT THERE'S SOMEONE SHE'S HAD HER HEART SET ON EVER SINCE CHILDHOOD...
SHE SAID SHE WOULDN'T EVEN CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL
WHAT?!
OH!
SOB



SIGNS KUSUMOCHI

AH, HEY!
UH, UM, SHE'S SURE LATE, THAT GIRL! SHE ONLY WENT TO GET SOME SNACKS, SO WHERE CAN SHE HAVE GOTTEN TO?!
WELL, WHATEVER, IT'D BE BEST IF SHE DOESN'T COME BACK RIGHT NOW.

OH!
I'M SO SORRY, MIWA! I SPLASHED YOU...
DRIP
'S OKAY. NO PROBLEM
MUMBLE
B, BUT...
WOBBLE


THE JAPANESE MUGWORT IS ALREADY SO BIG
HE STILL HASN'T COME THIS YEAR...
SIGH...
I REALLY AM SORRY!
I CAN NEVER TELL WHAT SHE'S REALLY THINKING

EVEN THOUGH I HAVE SOMETHING I WANTED TO SAY TO HIM. .
I'M BACK NO
W.
THUMP
..?
GASP
WHO'S THIS KID?
SHIROU!!

HEY! DON'T GO RUNNING AROUND WHEN YOUR FACE IS SO MESSY!
AH, YOU'RE BACK?
YO,
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, MIWA.
HOW'S YOUR HEALTH?
...
DRIP
DROP

IT'S BLEEDING!
YOUR NOSE IS BLEEDING!
MIWA!
...
UH..
DRIP
PAT
I BROUGHT YOUR MEDICINE.
SORRY I'M SO LATE
I'M GLAD.
DID SOMETHING GOOD HAPPEN?
HA HA, YOUR NOSE ALWAYS DID BLEED WHENEVER YOU GOT WORKED UP ABOUT SOMETHING

HE CAME AFTER ALL...
EIGHT YEARS EARLIER
AH! MIWA'S NOSE IS BLEEDING AGAIN!
HA HA HA
WAAH! THE BLOODY-FACED GIRL IS COMING THIS WAY!
EEEEW!!
RUN AWAY! RUN AWAY!
...
DROP
WHAT THE HECK'S WITH THIS BIRD!
CAW!
CAW!
SCUFF
OH, SORRY ABOUT THAT, KIDS.
CAW!
WAH!
DASH
OW!
YOU OKAY?
...
IT'S IN THE NATURE OF BIRDS LIKE HER TO ATTACK WHENEVER THEY SEE MEAN-SPIRITED THINGS.
YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE HER

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK
COUGH
TAP
...
HUNCH FORWARD AND PINCH YOUR NOSE LIKE THIS IF SOME BLOOD GOES DOWN YOUR THROAT, JUST SPIT
OKAY?
GO AHEAD AND SIT DOWN OVER THERE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR NOSEBLEED.

MIWA
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
OH ?

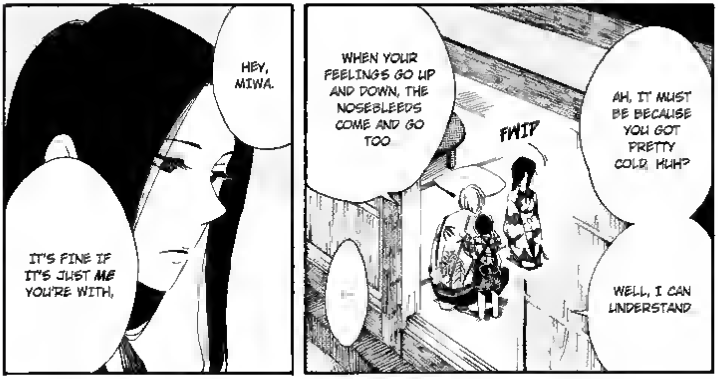
FLOP
!

IF YOU PUT A COOL CLOTH OR SOMETHING ON YOUR FOREHEAD, IT'LL CLOSE UP YOUR BLOOD VESSELS AND THE BLEEDING SHOULD STOP.
DON'T TURN YOUR FACE UP JUST YET, THOUGH.
...

NICE TO MEET YOU
ANYWAY, I'M A TRAVELING MEDICINE SELLER.
I'M TORAKICHI.
IT'S A PRETTY LOUSY NAME, HUH?
THAT'S A NICE NAME.
SPLAT
?!
TORAKICHI,
THIS BOY...
YEAH...
YOU DIDN'T SQUEEZE IT OUT YET!
GAH! MORON!
SHIYO DO IT!
SORRY, MIWA.
SQUELCH

SHIROU,
WHY DON'T YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF PROPERLY?
SHRINK
HE'S...
MY SON
WHY'RE YOU HIDING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
...
BLINK
SO HE HAS A CHILD
WHICH MEANS HE'S MARRIED, TOO

EVEN THOUGH WE'VE MET SO MANY TIMES OVER THE YEARS,
I DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT HIM
HM,
OH IT STOPPED ALREADY?
THE BLOOD

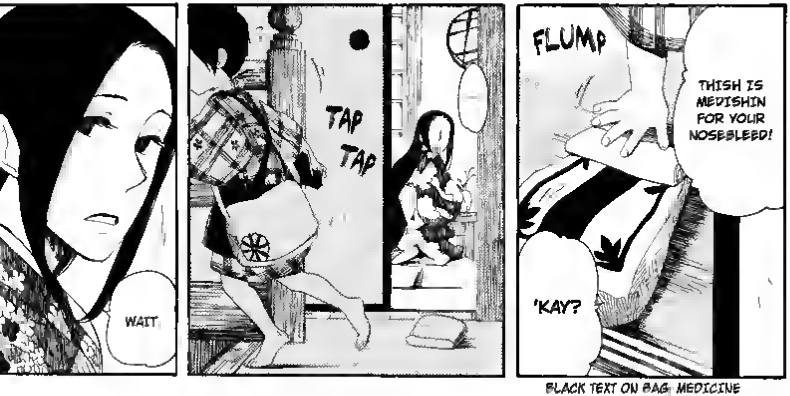

AH, IT MUST BE BECAUSE YOU GOT PRETTY COLD, HUH?
WHEN YOUR FEELINGS GO UP AND DOWN, THE NOSEBLEEDS COME AND GO TOO
FWIP
WELL, I CAN UNDERSTAND
HEY, MIWA.
IT'S FINE IF IT'S JUST ME YOU'RE WITH,

I KNOW YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD A HARD TIME SHOWING PEOPLE YOUR FEELINGS, EVEN WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG,
BUT WHEN YOU'RE IN FRONT OF SOMEONE WHO'S IMPORTANT TO YOU, YOU SHOULD SHOW OFF YOUR EXPRESSIONS MORE
BUT IF YOU DON'T SMILE A BIT MORE, THE GUY YOU LIKE MIGHT START TO DISLIKE YOU...

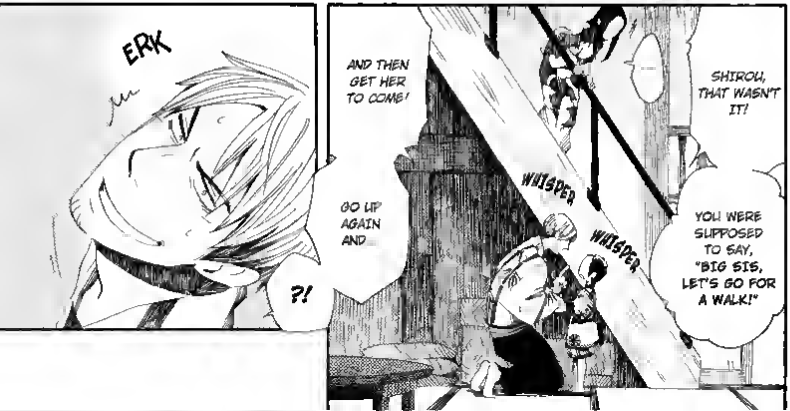
WHAM
FWOOSH
?!
WHAT, IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME?
HUH?!
WHAT THE HELL?!
HEY, MIWA!
PAPA, OKAY?
TAP TAP
OWWWW...
YEAH
IN FOLK MEDICINE, WE CALL IT "GAIYOU"
YOU MEAN THE STUFF THAT'S IN THOSE KUSA MOCHI?"
JAPANESE MUGWORT?
FOOTNOTE: LITERALLY "GRASS MOCHI," MADE USING JAPANESE MUGWORT MIXED IN WITH THE POUNDED RICE CAKES

[GAIYOU]
JAPANESE MUGWORT
THIS IS A SPECIAL MEDICINE JUST FOR YOU
I MADE A LOT, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT
•EFFECTIVE FOR ASTHMA, STRONG STOMACH, HEMERRHOIDS TO STOP BLEEDING FOR NOSEBLEEDS AND SO ON
HERE
IT HELPS STOP THINGS LIKE NOSE-BLEEDS
IT'LL BE HARD ON YOU, BUT IF YOU TAKE THIS MEDICINE YOUR CONDITION SHOULD IMPROVE.
I'LL MAKE SOME MORE AND BRING IT NEXT TIME I COME, TOO
IF YOU RUN OUT SOONER, WRITE AND LET ME KNOW.
YOU'LL COME AGAIN?
OF COURSE
REACH
UNTIL THEN, I'LL STAY HERE AND WAIT, MAKING KUSA MOCHI...
THEN I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN NEXT SPRING, WHEN THE MUGWORT IS BLOOMING.
REALLY?!

SQUEEZE
DRIP
THAT ISN'T SOMETHING YOU SHOULD BE LAUGHING ABOUT, IS IT?
ALTHOUGH YOU'RE CUTE WHEN YOU SMILE.
WELL THEN, I'LL COME AND ENJOY THE KUSA MOCHI NEXT TIME TOO.
I'M SO FOOLISH
...
TRUNDLE
SNIFFLE
ANYBODY WOULD HAVE SAID THAT IN THAT SITUATION, I GUESS...
AH.



BLACK TEXT ON BAG: MEDICINE
WHITE TEXT ON BAG: NANAKUSAYA



SFX: FWSSSHHHH
ザアアアアアア
...
WAH, IT'S POURING DOWN!
HAAA...
GLANCE
AH, MAN, I'M GLAD IT DIDN'T START RAINING THIS BAD UNTIL JUST NOW.
HA HA HA
RUSTLE
SIGH
WILL YOU TELL ME WHO IT IS? HUH?
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME INSTEAD OF THIS GUY YOU LIKE, RIGHT?!
OH, WAIT, I GET IT!
YOU'VE BEEN PRETTY QUIET THIS WHOLE TIME.
HEY...
...

HM? MY WIFE?
WELL, SHE'S
WHAT'S SHE LIKE?
HEY
YOUR WIFE
EVEN THOUGH I'M ASKING ABOUT YOU..
SIIGH
WHAT THE HECK'S WITH THAT BIG SIGH?!
WHAT IS IT ABOUT HER YOU LIKE?
IF IT WAS LOVE, WHICH ONE OF YOU CONFESSED?
WHA—
HEY, YOUR NOSE IS BLEEDING!
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY-THING! WHAT ARE YOU...
—THE HECK.
WHAT'S THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN?!
WHERE DID YOU MEET HER?
AT A MARRIAGE CEREMONY? OR WAS IT LOVE?
WOBBLE
I'M WAITING PATIENTLY
FOR YOUR GUIDANCE!

WHY?
BRGH, JUST STOP IT.
FLUMP
YOU DON'T WANT GUIDANCE FROM ME.
YOU WON'T BE HAPPY THAT WAY.

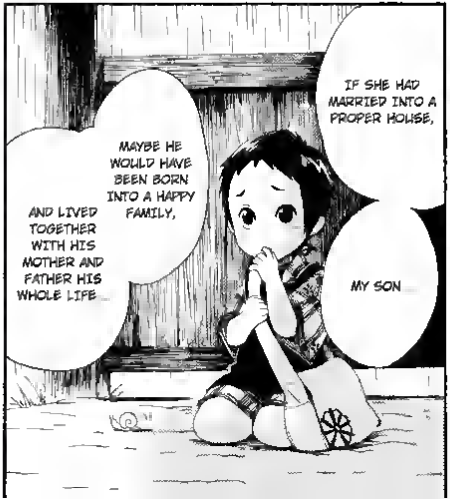
BLINK
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!

I JUST WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU, TORAKICHI...
I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT...
I'M SORRY...
!

IT'S NOT...
ANYTHING PARTICULARLY UNUSUAL ANYWAY...
AND I LIKED THE WAY SHE SMILED
SO I SAID HELLO AND...
SHE WAS ONE OF MY CUSTOMERS
?
WELL, IT'S REALLY NO DIFFERENT THAN YOUR SITUATION RIGHT NOW...
YOU MUST HAVE LEARNED HIS GOOD POINTS TOO WHEN THEY BROUGHT THE MARRIAGE PROPOSAL
BUT AS FOR ME,
I RUINED EVERYTHING.
I MEAN,
WE SORT OF RAN OFF TOGETHER, EVEN IF IT WAS AT LEAST HALF HER IDEA.
...
BECAUSE I WAS YOUNG, OR INEXPERIENCED, OR WHATEVER...
MY TRUE FEELINGS AT THAT TIME WERE MORE LIKE "I WANT TO MAKE THIS PERSON HAPPY" THAN ANYTHING ABOUT MARRIAGE, OR THE NECESSITIES OF STARTING A NEW HOUSEHOLD.
BUT,
HOW DO YOU THINK THAT TURNS OUT IN REALITY?

I COMPLETELY ABANDONED HER ALL BY HERSELF, EVERY DAY
AND THE FEW TIMES I WAS HOME, ALL WE DID WAS FIGHT
HAPPINESS... YEAH, RIGHT

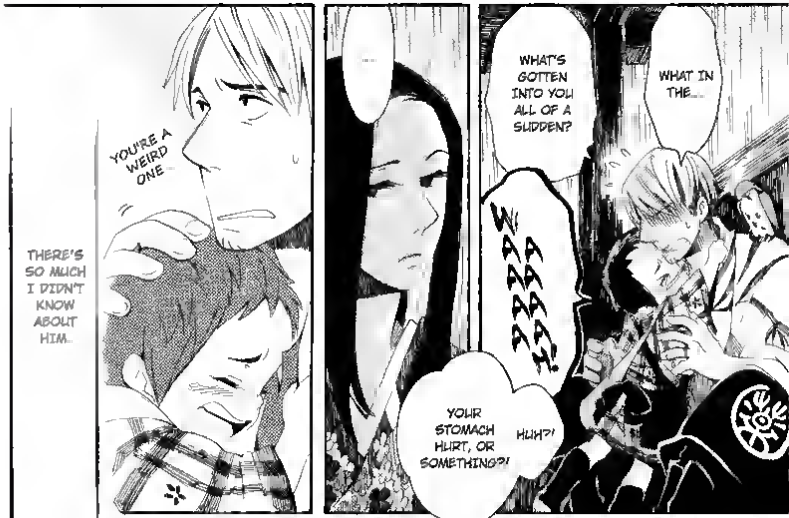
I WISH...
I COULD HAVE MADE HER LAUGH MORE OFTEN WHILE SHE WAS ALIVE
BUT IT'S TOO LATE...
I'LL NEVER GET ANOTHER CHANCE TO SEE HER SMILE NOW


IF SHE HAD MARRIED INTO A PROPER HOUSE,
MAYBE HE WOULD HAVE BEEN BORN INTO A HAPPY FAMILY,
AND LIVED TOGETHER WITH HIS MOTHER AND FATHER HIS WHOLE LIFE...
MY SON...

EVEN NOW, I FIND MYSELF THINKING
I HAVE TO GO THERE RIGHT AWAY, BUT...

TWITCH
YOU SHOULDN'T GET CLOSE TO ANY SHALLOW MEN LIKE THAT
...
IS THAT ENOUGH?

PAPA!
WAAAAAAAAH!
FWIP
WHACK
OW.
THUD


WHAT IN THE...
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?
WAAAAAAH!
HUH?!
YOUR STOMACH HURT, OR SOMETHING?!
YOU'RE A WEIRD ONE...
THERE'S SO MUCH I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT HIM...

BUT THAT HE'S LOST HER FOREVER,

THAT HE HAD SOMEONE HE LOVED WHEN HE WASN'T AROUND.

AND THAT NOW IT'S JUST HIS OWN PAIN HE'S HOLDING CLOSE

THAT HE LOVED THAT PERSON'S SMILE.

DO I HAVE THE MEDICINE IT WOULD TAKE TO HELP HIM HEAL THAT PAIN?

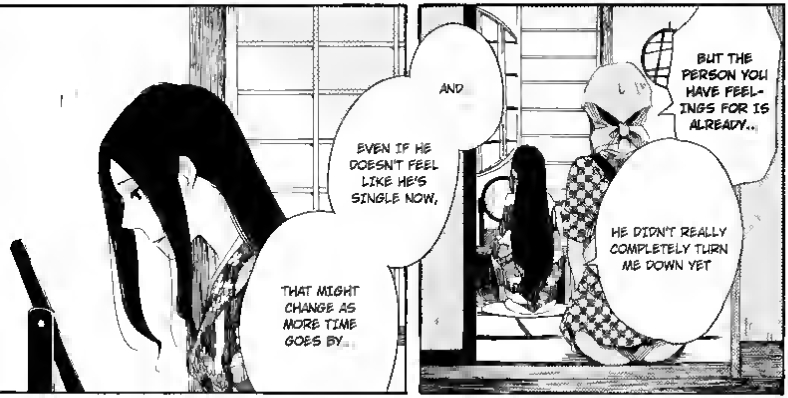
NO
IT'S NOT ME RIGHT NOW WHO CAN HELP HIM WITH THAT.
IT HURTS,
BUT RIGHT NOW, MORE THAN STAYING BY HIS SIDE, I

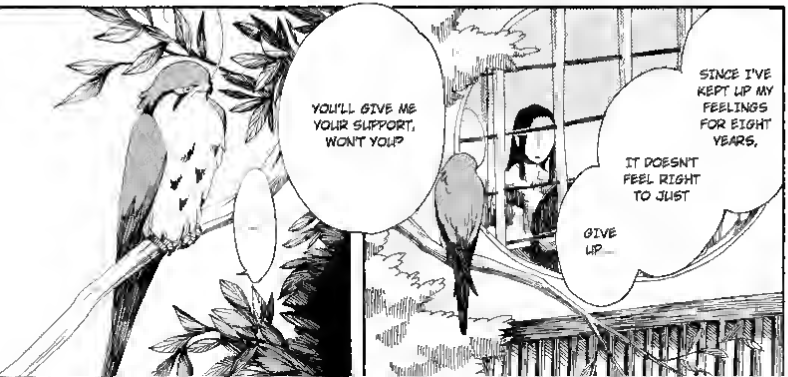
WH—
YOU'RE CRYING TOO?!
SNIFF
SNIFF
MIWA?

W—
SNIFF
SNIFF
GASP
WAS IT ALWAYS JUST A ONE-SIDED LOVE?!
AAAAAAAH
CHOMP
HEY HEY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU TWO?!
I GUESS YOU BOTH MUST HAVE EATEN SOMETHING THAT WENT BAD OR—
OWWW!

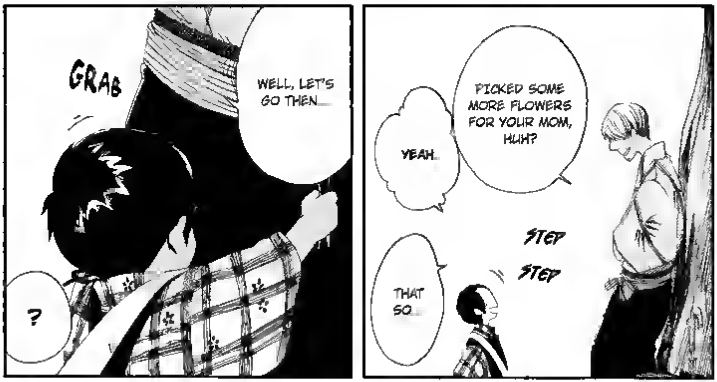
SNIFF
ONE-SIDED LOVE?
WHAT YOU MEAN THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN SO OUT OF IT ALL THIS TIME?
AH, JEEZE...
SQUEEZE
YOUR BLOOD AND YOUR TEARS ARE GETTING ALL OVER THE PLACE!
WAAAA
DON'T BE SO NICE TO ME,
YOU USELESS MEDICINE SELLER!

TOP SIGN: FUKU CONFECTIONERS
DOOR SIGN: FUKU


AND
EVEN IF HE DOESN'T FEEL LIKE HE'S SINGLE NOW,
THAT MIGHT CHANGE AS MORE TIME GOES BY...
BUT THE PERSON YOU HAVE FEELINGS FOR IS ALREADY..
HE DIDN'T REALLY COMPLETELY TURN ME DOWN YET

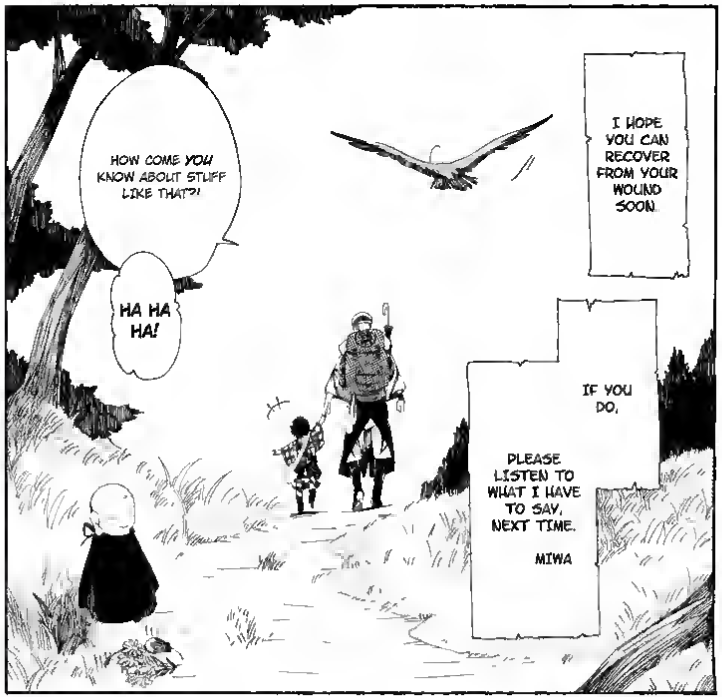


I WANT TO WAIT HERE AND MAKE KUSA MOCHI FOR ONE MORE YEAR AT LEAST...
RUSTLE
HE SAID HE'D COME BACK NEXT YEAR DURING THE JAPANESE MUGWORT SEASON, AFTER ALL...
HONESTLY, THIS GIRL...
BY THE WAY, WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU UP TO IN HERE?
...
PRACTICING MY SMILE.


GRAB
WELL, LET'S GO THEN...
?
PICKED SOME MORE FLOWERS FOR YOUR MOM, HUH?
YEAH.
STEP
STEP
THAT SO...

SHE REALLY
LOVED YOU, PAPA!
MAMA.
UM, UM,
WHAT IS IT?

WH—
EVEN IF YOU FOUGHT A LOT YOU GOT ALONG GOOD A LOT TOO RIGHT?
SHIYO KNOWS IT
BECAUSE I CAME FROM YOU AND MAMA,
RIGHT?
DEAR TORA-KICHI,


I HOPE YOU CAN RECOVER FROM YOUR WOUND SOON.
HOW COME YOU KNOW ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT?!
HA HA HA!
IF YOU DO,
PLEASE LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY, NEXT TIME.
MIWA

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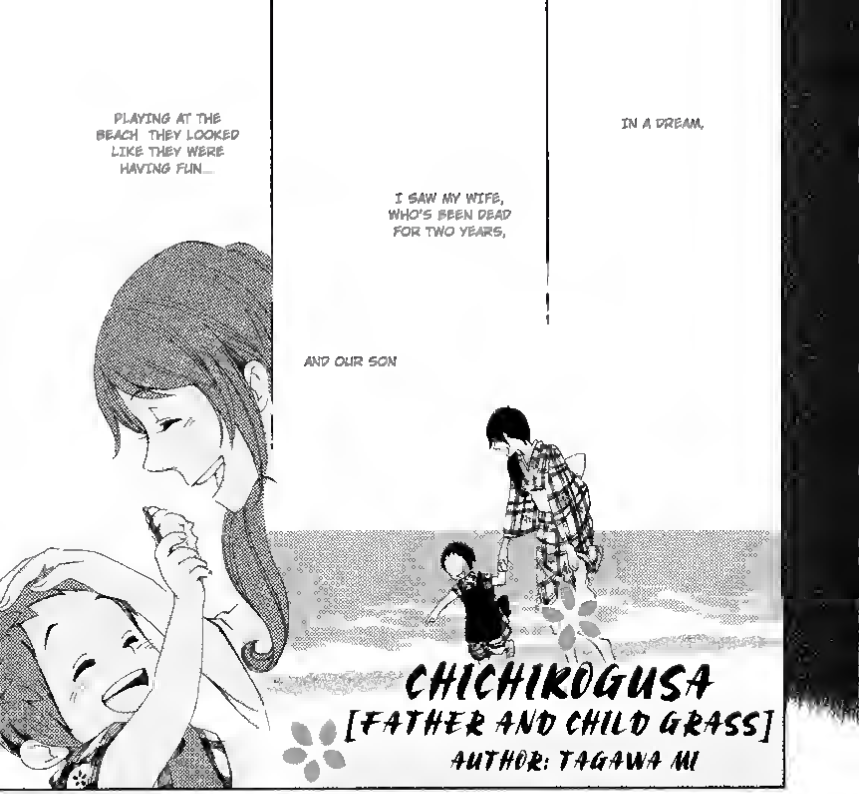
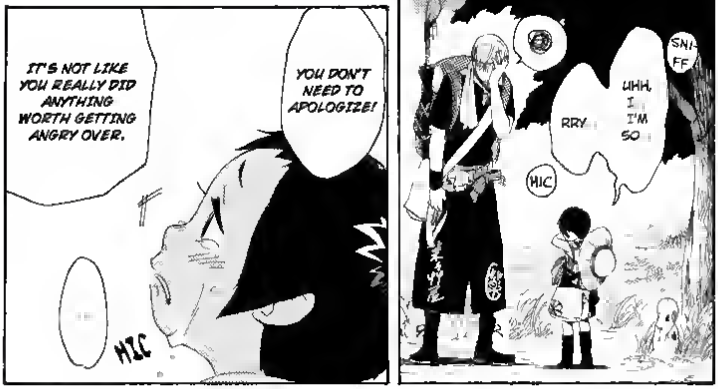
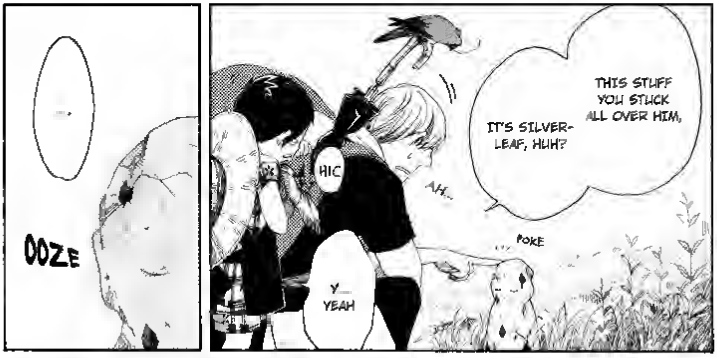

PLAYING AT THE BEACH, THEY LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE HAVING FUN...
IN A DREAM,
I SAW MY WIFE, WHO'S BEEN DEAD FOR TWO YEARS,
AND OUR SON
CHICHIKOGUSA
[FATHER AND CHILD GRASS]
AUTHOR: TAGAWA MI

HEY! WHADDA YA THINK YOU'RE DOIN'?!
AH, IT'S HOT.
BZZ-ZZZ
BZZ-ZZZ
CHAPTER 4: THE BEACH AND THE PROMISE

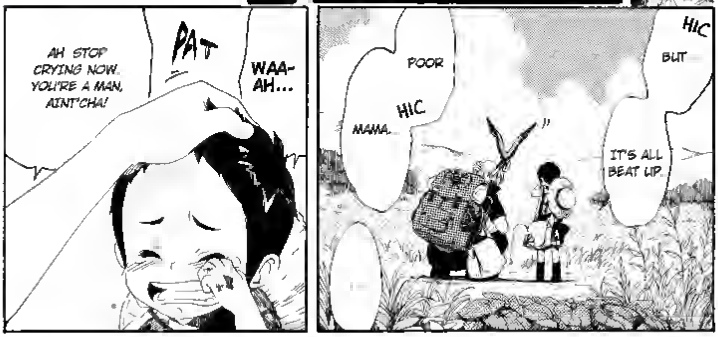
HONESTLY... SOME PEOPLE HAVE NO RESPECT.
PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES FOR MY SON.
LOOK AT WHAT YOU DID TO THIS JIZOU STATUE!
YOU'RE GOING TO SUFFER FOR THAT!
WILT
GLARE
FLINCH
YOU...
SHIROU!


SNIFF
UHH, I I'M SO
RRY...
HIC
YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE!
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU REALLY DID ANYTHING WORTH GETTING ANGRY OVER.
HIC

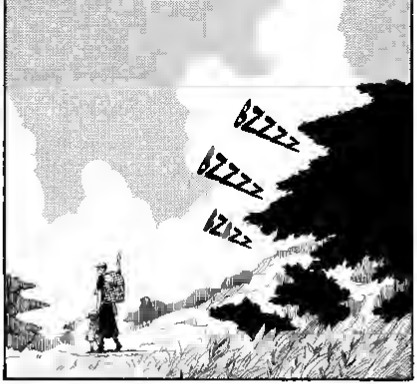

THIS STUFF YOU STUCK ALL OVER HIM,
IT'S SILVER-LEAF, HUH?
HIC
AH...
POKE
Y... YEAH
OOZE

SNIFF
HIC
UM...
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT EFFECT THESE LEAVES HAVE?
HEY, SHIROU,
... AHH.

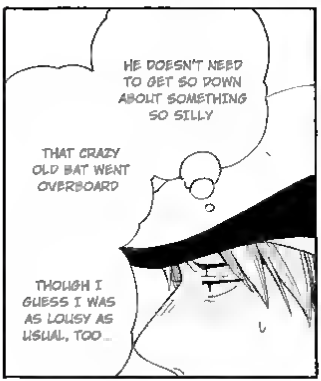
FARFUGIUM JAPONICUM
[SILVERLEAF]
USES.
ACCORDING TO FOLK MEDICINE, THE JUICE OF THIS PLANT IS GOOD FOR CUTS, BRUISES, ETC
IT'S GOOD... FOR BRUISES, AND... CUTS
HIC
SNIFF
THAT'S RIGHT
SO IT'S NOT GOING TO FIX ANY DAMAGE ON A STONE JIZOU STATUE...
STAB
OW!


AH STOP CRYING NOW. YOU'RE A MAN, AIN'T'CHA!
PAT
WAA-AH...
POOR
HIC
MAMA...
BUT
HIC
IT'S ALL BEAT UP.

JUST FORGET WHATEVER THAT OLD BAT TOLD YA!
SNIFF
AND ANYWAY, YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING BAD, RIGHT?!


BZZZZ
BZZZZ
BZZZZ

I'M SURE YOUR MOM UNDER-STANDS...


HE DOESN'T NEED TO GET SO DOWN ABOUT SOMETHING SO SILLY
THAT CRAZY OLD BAT WENT OVERBOARD
THOUGH I GUESS I WAS AS LOUSY AS USUAL, TOO...

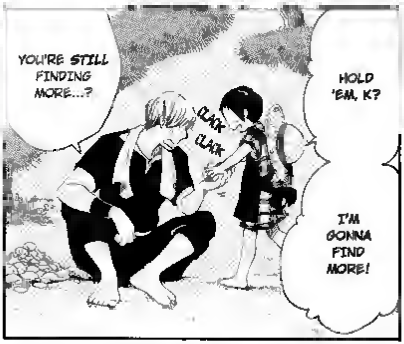
...
SIGH
GLOOMY...

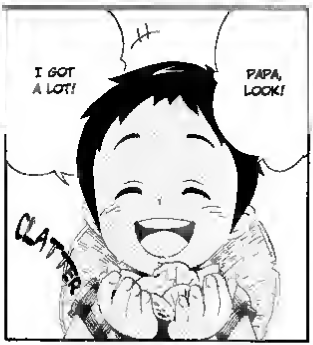
HEY...
SHIROU...

FSHHHHHH
WHY DON'T WE TAKE A BREAK FOR A BIT...
GASP
I WAS PLANNING ON COMING HERE TOMORROW, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH
THIS IS YOUR FIRST TIME AT THE BEACH, RIGHT?
TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES AND COME OVER HERE
IT'S FUN.

LOOK,
SOMETHING NICE GOT LEFT BEHIND
HERE.
HAHA.
JUMP
?!
YOU'LL LIKE THIS
...
AAAAH!
WOBBLE

HA HA HA HA HA!
SPLASH
-SPLASH
WHOOOSHHHH
...


YOU'RE STILL FINDING MORE...?
CLACK CLACK
HOLD 'EM, K?
I'M GONNA FIND MORE!


I GOT A LOT!
PAPA, LOOK!
CLATTER

...

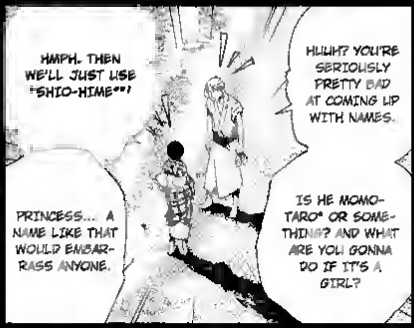
YEAH!
THUMP THUMP THUMP
YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH TO START UP SHOP...
A MOUNTAIN OF SHELLS

RUSTLE
HEY, DON'T EAT STUFF LIKE THAT ON MY SHOULDER.
...
HE REALLY IS...
JUST LIKE HER...
WOW!
THIS ONE LOOKS JUST LIKE A CHERRY BLOSSOM!
HEY, SHIORI, LET'S GO BACK TO THE INN ALREADY...

WE'RE NOT GOING BACK UNTIL I FIND AN OYSTER WITH A PEARL IN IT!
EVEN WHEN I'M ON HOLIDAY I GOTTA GO ALL OVER...
SPIN
RUB
RUB
MY BROTHER KANOE SAID YOU CAN FIND THEM ALL OVER THE PLACE ON THE SHORE LIKE THIS
OH I WILL.
HE WAS TEASING YOU! HE KNOWS YOU'LL FALL FOR WHATEVER ANYONE TELLS YOU!
LIKE YOU'RE GONNA FIND ONE OF THOSE

FOOTNOTE: AT THE TIME OF THE STORY IN THE LATE 1800S, LOANWORDS LIKE ROMAN (ROMANCE) AND MARON (CHESTNUT, FROM THE FRENCH) WERE JUST MAKING THEIR WAY INTO JAPANESE. SINCE THESE TWO WORDS USE THE SAME SOUNDS, SHIORI MIXED THEM UP.

FOONOTE: "TARO" IS THE GENERIC BOY'S NAME ENDING.
AH HE KICKED AGAIN!
IT'S ROMANCE DON'T USE DIFFICULT WORDS IF YOU'RE GONNA SCREW 'EM UP, IDIOT!
TOO BAD HUH, SHIO-TARO*?
YOUR PAPA DOESN'T HAVE ANY CHESTNUT* AT ALL


HMPH. THEN WE'LL JUST USE "SHIO-HIME"*!
PRINCESS... A NAME LIKE THAT WOULD EMBARRASS ANYONE.
HUUH? YOU'RE SERIOUSLY PRETTY BAD AT COMING UP WITH NAMES.
IS HE MOMOTARO* OR SOMETHING? AND WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO IF IT'S A GIRL?

FOOTNOTES: MOMOTARO (PEACH BOY) IS A JAPANESE FOLK TALE. HIME ("PRINCESS") IS THE GENERIC GIRL WORD, LIKE TARO IS FOR BOYS.

REALLY?
IF YOU SAY "TORA-TAROU" I'M GONNA BE MAD!
SIGH
DON'T LUMP ME TOGETHER WITH YOU!
I...
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT.
A NAME!
EVEN THOUGH I ASKED YOU TO, YOU'VE COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN!
...
HUH?
WELL, THERE'S
SHI
ROU?
STUMBLE
AH.
HEY!
THAT'S COLD!
JERK!
YOU JUST MADE THAT UP!
SPLASH
IT'S JUST SHIO-TAROU WITH THE "TA" AND THE "O" TAKEN OUT!

GRAB
THAT WAS CLOSE.
MORON!
WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD HAPPEN TO YOU AND THE BABY IF YOU FELL OVER?!
IT'S NOT JUST YOU IN THERE ANY MORE, YOU KNOW...
KISS
SHIORI!
HA HA HA!
I GOT YOU.
SPIN

HEY, TORA.
ONCE SHIROU'S BORN, LET'S COME HERE AGAIN!
WE CAN LOOK FOR SEASHELLS TOGETHER AND PLAY.
PROMISE, OKAY!
HA HA HA
IS SHIROU... REALLY OKAY FOR A NAME...?
PAPA!

AND,
I'LL GIVE THIS ONE TO MAMA!
FLUMP
LOOK.
THIS ONE'S ALL SPARKLY!
PAT PAT
I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU AND EEJI!
UM, YA KNOW, I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE!
HUH?
YEAH!
THE BEACH...
IS FUN, HUH?
NUH-UH,
I CAME WITH YOU AND MAMA!
?!
WHAT, YOUR AUNTIE BROUGHT YOU HERE OR SOMETHING?

MAMA, LOOK!
OH, WHAT A COOL LITTLE CRAB!
HA HA HA
?
HUH? DID WE COME ? I DON'T THINK SO..

SHIO'S MAMA
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I WAIT SHE'LL NEVER TALK TO ME,
AND NEVER GIVE ME MEDICINE

SHIO...
MISSES ...

Chichikogusa

Chapter 5

BY TAGAWA MI

Antisense Scanslations

Translations/Edit by Thestripedone

Cleaning by Arleea

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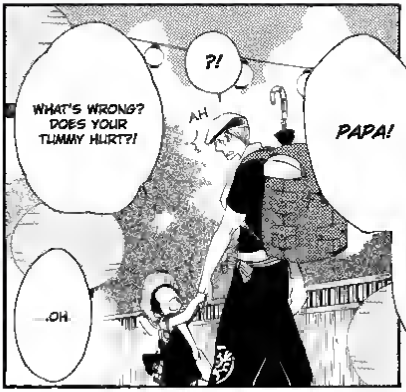
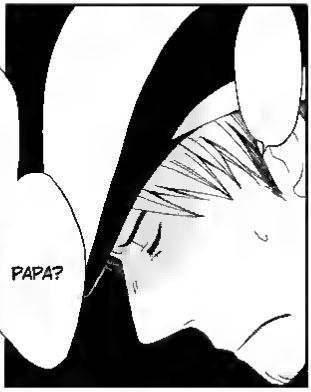
SHIYO
MISSES
Nnnnn...


?!
AH
WHAT'S WRONG? DOES YOUR TUMMY HURT?!
...OH


PAPA!
PAPA?

SORRY...
IT'S NOTHING...

SQUEEZE

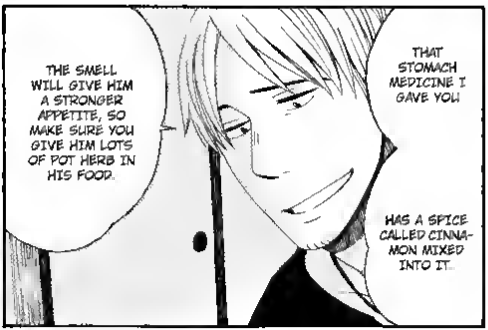
*FOOTNOTE: THE BON FESTIVAL IS ONE OF THE KEY BUDDHIST HOLIDAYS IN JAPAN, HELD TO HONOR THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

YOU'RE RIGHT, IT IS ALMOST FESTIVAL TIME
DING...
YES, THE BON FESTIVAL.
I WAS THINKING OF GOING OUT TOGETHER WITH HIM IF HIS HEALTH WAS GOOD, BUT...

HE'S BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR ARRIVAL SO MUCH
BUT HE'S GOTTEN SO THIN EVEN THOUGH HE EATS JUST FINE

IS THE FESTIVAL A HOLIDAY FOR YOU? OR DO YOU WORK THROUGH IT?
WELL, IT'S BUSY...
HERE ALL DONE

EH?
MUMBLE MUMBLE
WHAT WAS THAT?


THAT STOMACH MEDICINE I GAVE YOU
THE SMELL WILL GIVE HIM A STRONGER APPETITE, SO MAKE SURE YOU GIVE HIM LOTS OF POT HERB IN HIS FOOD.
HAS A SPICE CALLED CINNAMON MIXED INTO IT...

I'M...
TERRIBLY SORRY FOR BEING SO UNPROFES-SIONAL
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

YES... THAT'S RIGHT
TORA-KICHI BROUGHT HIS LITTLE SON ALONG

PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME
HE SAID HE'D LIKE YOU TO COME VISIT AGAIN WHEN HE'S HEALTHY
WE'RE JUST A BOTHERSOME OLD COUPLE USED TO SAYING WHATEVER COMES TO MIND

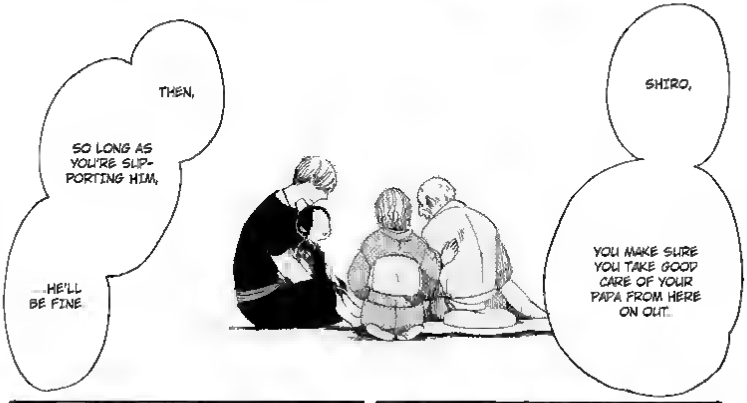
SHIRO!
COME HERE A MINUTE!

MUMBLE MUMBLE
EH?
WHAT?
...?

HELLO
UM...
OKAY, GOOD.
AND YOUR NAME?
THIS NICE OLD MAN SAID HE'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU.
YOU CAN GREET HIM PROPERLY, RIGHT?
SHI
SHIYO
I'M FOUR.
YOU'RE THREE, AIN'TCHA!
...
NGNYUM
IT'S BOTHERSOME TO TALK WHEN IT'S SO HOT.
SINCE I HAVE TO WAKE UP ALL THE WAY
WELL, LITTLE SHIRO
OH MY.
LATELY HE'S FINALLY
BUT WAIT A SECOND, YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO TALK THE WHOLE TIME!
HOW CLEVER, THAT WAS A VERY GOOD GREETING
HA HA HA.

WHY ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ANCIENT HISTORY LIKE THAT, OLD MAN!
EVERY YEAR, WE'D ENJOY LISTENING TO THAT YOUNG MAN'S STORIES
AT THE TIME HE TOOK OVER FROM THE PREVIOUS MEDICINE SELLER, HE WAS STILL QUITE A YOUNG MAN.
YOUR PAPA HERE
HAS BEEN DELIVERING MEDICINE TO THIS FEEBLE OLD MAN FOR MORE THAN TEN YEARS.
TING
MYAAA...WN
AND THEN— I GUESS IT WAS JUST LAST YEAR.
HE SUDDENLY DIDN'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT HIMSELF...
ABOUT THE GIRL HE LIKED,
OR HOW A HEALTHY YOUNG BOY HAD BEEN BORN...
OR ABOUT HOW HE'D MARRIED HER,
HA HA HA
WE FELT CERTAIN SOMETHING SAD HAD HAPPENED, SO WE COULDN'T STOP OURSELVES FROM POKING OUR NOSES IN...
MEETING HIM SO OFTEN OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS, THE TRUTH IS WE'D COME TO THINK OF HIM MORE AS A SON THAN AS JUST A MERCHANT

AFTER ALL, HE HAS SUCH A CUTE KID LIKE YOU WITH HIM...
BUT... WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE WE DON'T NEED TO WORRY.
WE FELT CERTAIN THAT THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME HUGE HEARTBREAK IN HIS LIFE.


THEN,
SO LONG AS YOU'RE SUPPORTING HIM,
...HE'LL BE FINE.
SHIRO,
YOU MAKE SURE YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR PAPA FROM HERE ON OUT.

FLAP
CAW.
CAW.
AND YOUR MAMA WILL ALWAYS BE THERE BY YOUR SIDE.

GEH

SHIRO!
DON'T WANDER OFF LIKE THAT!

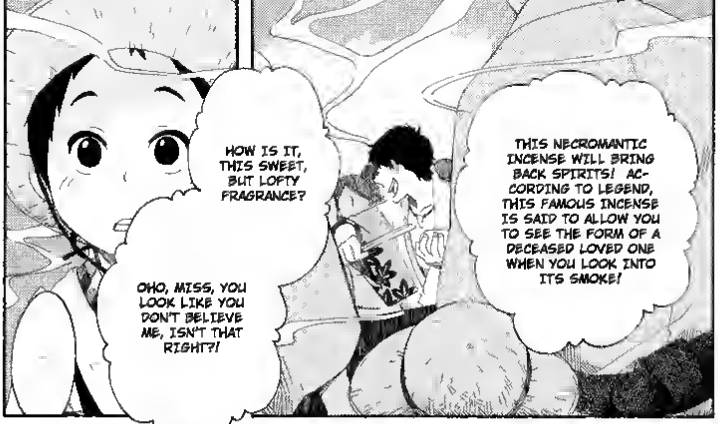
C+W.
THAT TOOK A WHILE
A LETTER?

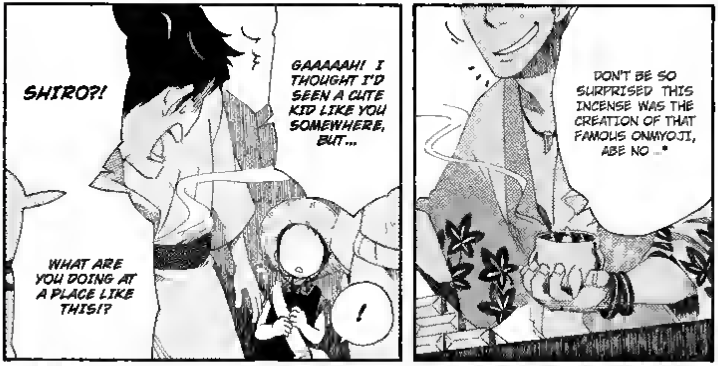
GREETINGS,
IT DOESN'T SEEM YOU'RE COMING HOME FOR BON IF YOU SAY THAT YOU HAVE NO PLANS AT ALL TO BRING SHIRO BACK HERE, PLEASE KNOW THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO TAKE ACTION ON OUR SIDE
UGH SCARY...

BIG SIS AGAIN.
SNIFF

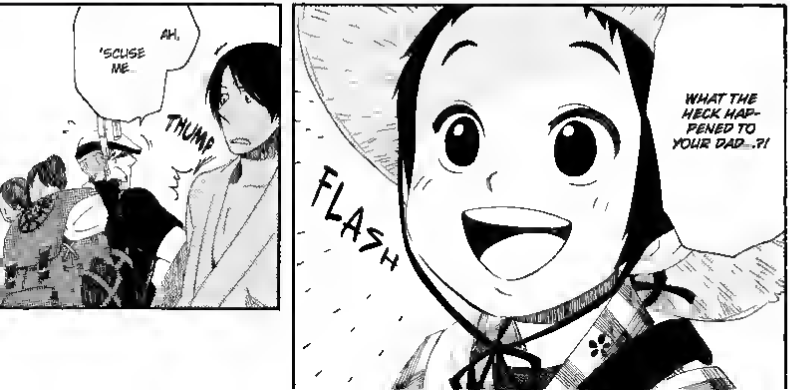
NOW THEN!
OUR SPECIAL DEAL TODAY IS THIS NECROMANTIC INCENSE!
SNIFF
SNIFF

SHIRO?
TO TAKE ACTION...
HUH?


HOW IS IT, THIS SWEET, BUT LOFTY FRAGRANCE?
OHO, MISS, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?!
THIS NECROMANTIC INCENSE WILL BRING BACK SPIRITS! ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THIS FAMOUS INCENSE IS SAID TO ALLOW YOU TO SEE THE FORM OF A DECEASED LOVED ONE WHEN YOU LOOK INTO ITS SMOKE!

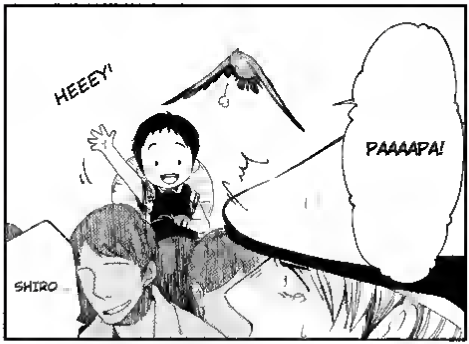

SHIRO?!
GAAAAAH! I THOUGHT I'D SEEN A CUTE KID LIKE YOU SOMEWHERE, BUT...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT A PLACE LIKE THIS!?
DON'T BE SO SURPRISED THIS INCENSE WAS THE CREATION OF THAT FAMOUS ONMYOJI, ABE NO -*

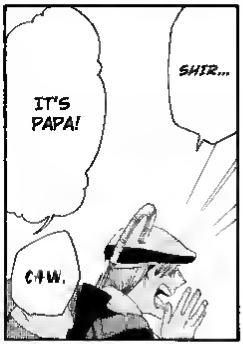
*FOOTNOTE: ABE NO SEIMEI WAS A FAMOUS ONMYOJI, OR DIVINER, ACTIVE IN LATE 10TH CENTURY JAPAN. AFTER HIS DEATH, MANY LEGENDS AROSE AROUND HIS LIFE, MAKING HIM SORT OF LIKE MERLIN IN ARTHURIAN MYTHOLOGY



FLAP
IEJI! GO SEARCH OVER THERE!
AHH, DAMMIT!
THIS IS WHY I TOLD HIM NOT TO WANDER OFF...

祭
祭
SHIRO?
HEY!


HEEEY!
PAAAAPA!
SHIRO


SHIR...
IT'S PAPA!
CAW.

YOU'RE GONNA GET IT IF YOU LET THIS LITTLE TREASURE OUT OF YOUR SIGHT LIKE THAT.
HEEY, PAAAAAAPA.
GAH

HUH?
WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU RIDING ON

HUH?
WH—
KANOE?!

BEEN A WHILE, AIN'T IT, TORA-KICHI?
YER FACE SURE HAS THAT "WHY ARE YOU HERE" LOOK ON IT.

HEH.
WELL, WHATEVER. WE'LL TALK LATER.
FOR NOW...

HE MIGHT JUST GET SNATCHED UP BY SOME DASHING YOUNG GUY, DON'T'CHA THINK?

FOR REAL, THOUGH, THAT WAS QUITE A PAIN.
WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE KID YOU USED TO MAKE ME RUN AROUND ALL OVER WITH YOU ON MY SHOULDERS. IT'S LIKE THAT ALL OVER AGAIN
THOUGH THAT WAS WHEN I STILL HAD SOME MEAT ON ME...
AND BACK BEFORE MY HAIRLINE STARTED RECEDING...
SIGH

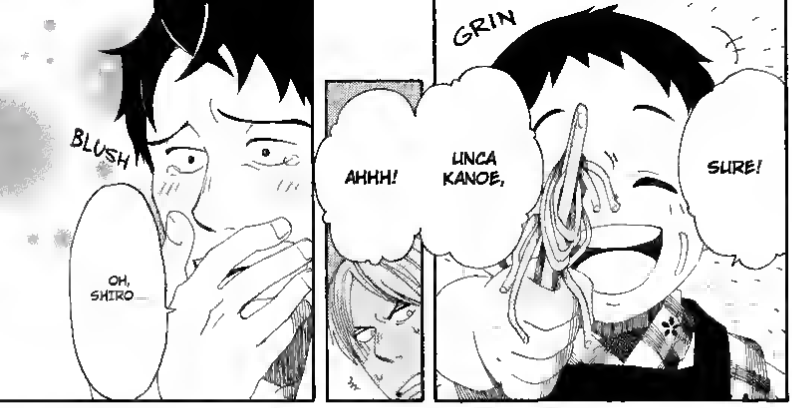
WHY DON'T YOU JUST DOSE YOURSELF WITH SOME OF THAT CRAP MEDICINE YOU SELL, YOU QUACK*!
YOUR BIG BROTHER'S BEIN' SERIOUS HERE!
YOU'RE A FRICKIN' MEDICINE-SELLER, AIN'T CHA! JUST GIMME SOME GOOD MEDICINE OR SOMETHIN'!
SHUT IT!

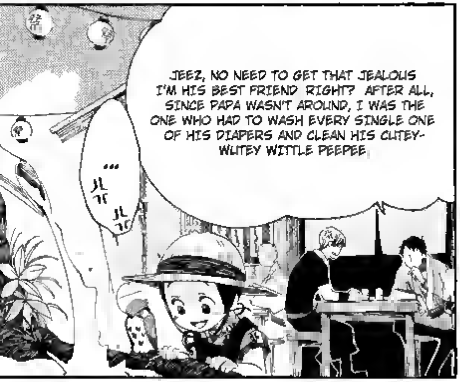
*THEY WORK AT RIVAL STORES

HEY, LATELY MY PILLOW'S BEEN STINKING LIKE SOME OLD MAN WAS LYING DOWN ON IT YOU THINK I MIGHT HAVE CAUGHT SOMETHING? HEY...
LIKE I'D KNOW!

SIGH COLD MOON

GRAGH!
MAN, THAT LOOKS GOOD, SHIRO! GIVE UNCA KANOE A BIT TOO, AHHHH ♡
SLAM
ANYWAY I GET IT. YOU'RE JUST HERE BECAUSE BIG SIS ASKED YOU TO


BLUSH
OH, SHIRO...
AHHH!
LINCA KANOE,
GRIN
SURE!

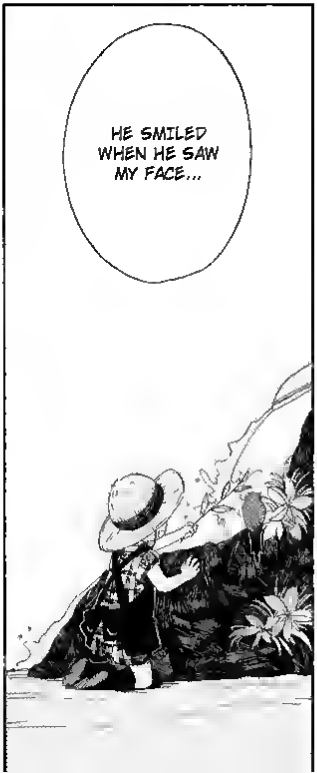

JEEZ, NO NEED TO GET THAT JEALOUS I'M HIS BEST FRIEND RIGHT? AFTER ALL, SINCE PAPA WASN'T AROUND, I WAS THE ONE WHO HAD TO WASH EVERY SINGLE ONE OF HIS DIAPERS AND CLEAN HIS CUTEY-WUTEY WITTLE PEEPEE
...
KANOE!
EEEEEEE!
WELL THEN, I WON'T TURN YOU DOWN...
AAAAAH!

FOOO...
YOU'RE NOT ENTIRELY WRONG
ANYWAY
FWSH

THEY WERE TO COME FIND SHIRO
SO FAR AS SIS'S ORDERS,
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING WHEN YOU LEFT WITH SHIRO?
YOU'RE JUST AFRAID TO DENY HER BECAUSE SHE GIVES YOU MONEY!
SHIRO!
IT'S TRUE THAT I'M VERY LOYAL TO SIS.
YOU'RE HER SERVANT...
WE'VE BEEN RAISING SHIRO AS ONE OF OUR OWN! WE TOLD HIM YOU WERE DEAD, SO DON'T YOU DARE SHOW YOUR FACE AROUND HERE AGAIN!
YOU ABANDONED YOUR OWN SON FOR TWO WHOLE YEARS, AND NOW YOU COME IN HERE LIKE THIS...?!
...!
THAT'S

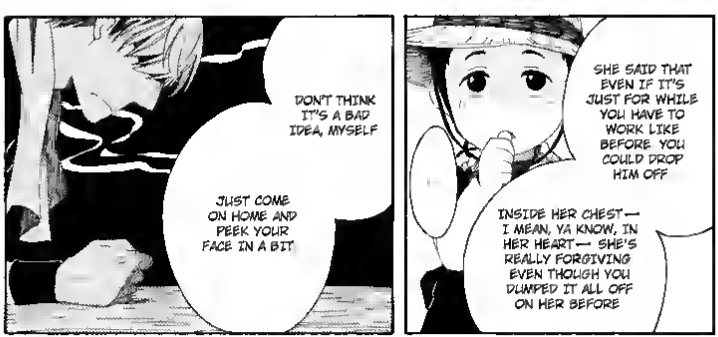
WELL IT'S JUST WHAT'S EXPECTED FROM A GUY LIKE YOU ANYWAY, I GUESS.
I WAS HALF-CRAZY BACK THEN, OKAY!
I REALLY DID THINK HE'D BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT A FATHER LIKE ME AROUND...
GRIP
BUT AFTER TWO YEARS OF IT,
WHEN I THOUGHT FOR SURE HE WOULD HAVE FORGOTTEN ME COMPLETELY,

IN ANY CASE, SOONER OR LATER HE'S GONNA START GETTING IN THE WAY OF WORK, ISN'T HE?
AND? SO YOU SUDDENLY FELL FOR HIM AND TOOK HIM OFF WITH YOU, THEN?
GULP


HE SMILED WHEN HE SAW MY FACE...

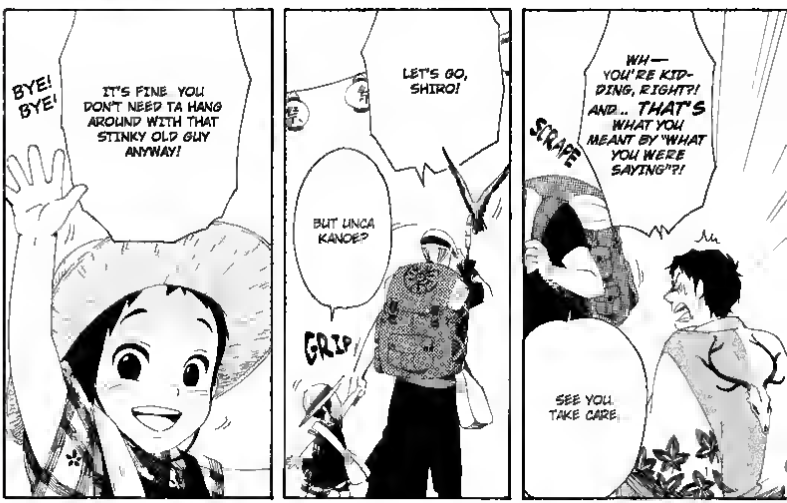
I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT EVEN TAKING A BREAK FOR BON.
WHAT WILL YOU DO IF SHIRO COMES DOWN WITH SOME BIG ILLNESS?
HE HAS PROBLEMS WITH NIGHT CRYING TOO, RIGHT?
WHAT IF THAT GETS WORSE AGAIN?
OR WHAT IF YOUR OWN BODY GIVES OUT BEFORE THAT?

—IS WHAT SIS TOLD ME TO SAY.
AH, BUT DON'T MISUNDERSTAND.
IT'S ONLY SHIRO SHE'S THINKING ABOUT, SHE SAID
YAAAY!


SHE SAID THAT EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR WHILE YOU HAVE TO WORK LIKE BEFORE YOU COULD DROP HIM OFF
INSIDE HER CHEST— I MEAN, YA KNOW, IN HER HEART— SHE'S REALLY FORGIVING EVEN THOUGH YOU DUMPED IT ALL OFF ON HER BEFORE
DON'T THINK IT'S A BAD IDEA, MYSELF
JUST COME ON HOME AND PEEK YOUR FACE IN A BIT

HERE, PAPA!
THE WATER'S COLD!
SLORSH
SLORSH
SLORSH
DIDJA COOL DOWN?
YEAH?
. . .ABOUT WHAT YOU WERE SAYING
'KAY!
OH, THAT'S NICE, THAT'S NICE! DO IT TO UNCA KANOE TOO!
SCRAPE

THAT STRONG ODOR AND THE REASON YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR BODY'S ALWAYS OUT OF ENERGY IS ENTIRELY BECAUSE OF THAT SMOKING.
IF YOU QUIT, YOU'LL FEEL BETTER PRETTY MUCH RIGHT AWAY. WELL, THAT'S IF YOU COULD DO IT.
DROP
ANYWAY, IT'S A BAD INFLUENCE ON SHIRO, SO I DON'T WANT YOU AROUND!
...HUH?


BYE! BYE!
IT'S FINE. YOU DON'T NEED TA HANG AROUND WITH THAT STINKY OLD GUY ANYWAY!
LET'S GO, SHIRO!
BUT LINCA KANOE?
GRIP
WH— YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?! AND... THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT BY "WHAT YOU WERE SAYING"?!
SCRAPE
SEE YOU. TAKE CARE.

HMMM
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S AN OLD GEEZER, AIN'T'CHA?
SUCH A COWARD...
FWIT
WAVE
—HEY, PAPA
MM?
BUT?! QUITTING! ISN'T THAT EVEN WORSE THAN THE BODY ODOR?!
WAAAAAH!
D'YOU KNOW ANY MEDISHIN TO BRING MAMA BACK...?
WHY THIS, ALL OF A SUDDEN...?
PAPA, YOU KNOW LOTSA MEDISHIN HUH?

SHIRO...
THAT'S...
PROMISE, OKAY ..?
IT'D BE SAD IF SHE WAS A JIZO STATUE F'REVER...
AND SHIYO WANT'S TA GO TO THE OCEAN WITH MAMA...
WAS BACK TO NORMAL
I COULD HUG HER AGAIN HUH?
AND AND...
HOLD HANDS
HUH...

Chichikogusa

Chapter 6

BY TAGAWA MI

Antisense Scanslations

Translations/Edit by Thestripedone

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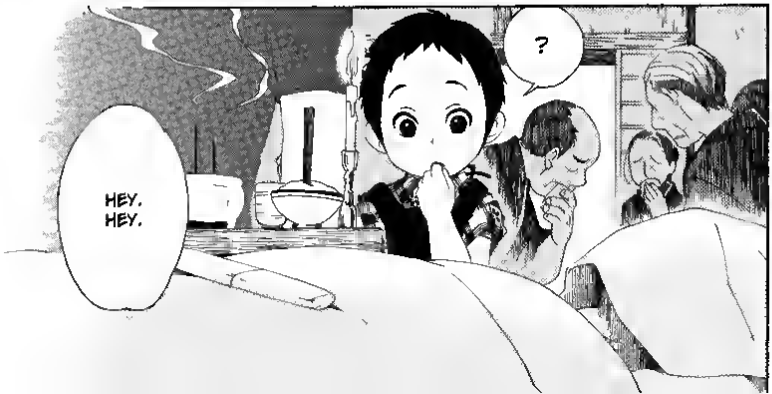
CHICHIKOGUSA
[FATHER AND CHILD GRASS]
AUTHOR TAGAWA MI

CHAPTER 6: A FATHER'S LOVE



RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
WOBBLE
PAPA?
HE DIDN'T WAKE UP TODAY, SO...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
DID THE OLD MAN GO SLEEPY-BYE?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
HE'S NOT SLEEPING.
THAT OLD MAN... HE DIED.
SHIROU...
LISTEN, OKAY?

THERE ISN'T ANY SORT OF MEDICINE THAT CAN MAKE YOU BETTER AGAIN
AND WHEN YOU DIE,
YOU CAN'T WAKE UP AGAIN. YOU CAN'T TALK ANY MORE.
DIED?
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU'RE NOT ANYWHERE ANY MORE...
ANYTHING THAT'S ALIVE HAS TO DIE ONE DAY
YOUR MAMA...
WHY...?

SHE'S NOT HERE ANYWHERE, EITHER.
I KNOW YOU WERE REALLY YOUNG...
BUT THE TRUTH IS PAPA'S BEEN RUNNING AWAY FROM IT TOO...
HUG
THERE WAS... AN ACCIDENT...
HER FOOT SLIPPED ON A MOUNTAIN PATH...
THAT SHE DIDN'T TURN INTO A JIZOU STATUE...
WASN'T ANY-WHERE...
I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU THAT YOUR MAMA

SHOVE
?!

YOU TOO, PAPA!
YOU SAID YOU AND MAMA AND SHIO WOULD ALWAYS BE TOGETHER!
MAMA AND THAT OLD MAN SAID THEY'D ALWAYS BE BY MY SIDE!
SHIROU
NO!

SHIROU!
DASH

SHIO'S MAMA ISN'T GONE!
PAPA, YOU MEANIE!

UUH...
I'M GLAD; I'VE BEEN LOOKIN' ALL OVER FOR YOU.
WHAT'S UP, SHIROU? SO WE MEET AGAIN!

POOF
OOP.

YOU TOO, OLD MAN OVER THERE
GIMME A MOMENT A YOUR TIME

I WAS WONDERIN' IF YOU WOULDN'T LIKE TA ACCOMPANY OL' KANDEMON ON A LITTLE ERRAND...
!
RUSTLE
WAAAAH..

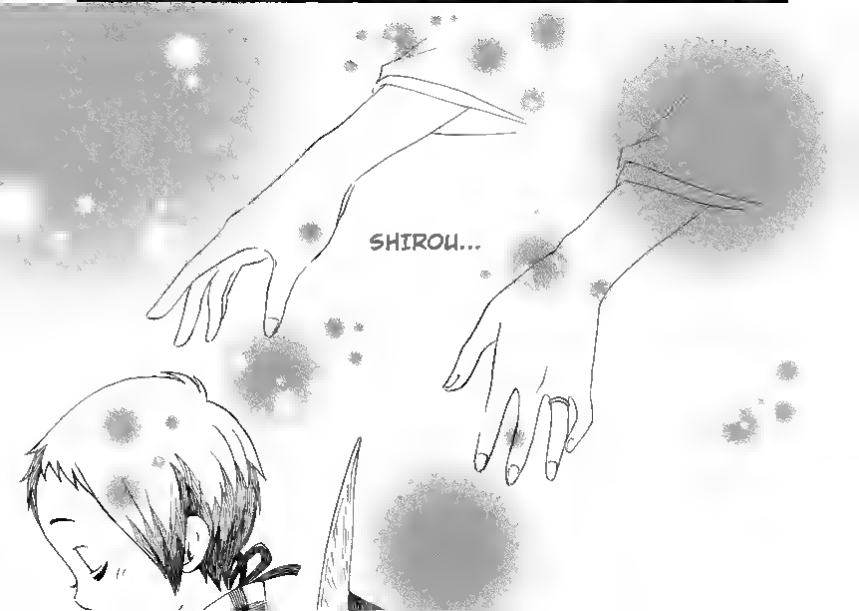
HEE HEE HEE

CRACKLE
CRACKLE

AROUND THESE PARTS THEY CALL TODAY "WELCOMING FIRE" DAY.
THESE "WELCOMING FIRES"
THEY'RE FIRES WE LIGHT ONCE A YEAR SO THE SPIRITS OF OUR ANCESTORS CAN FIND THEIR WAY BACK HOME
YOU MADE ONE LAST YEAR FOR YOUR MAMA, RIGHT?
THIS THING WE CALL BON, YA KNOW...
IT'S A SPECIAL TIME OF YEAR WHEN THE PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED CAN COME BACK TO THEIR FAMILY. GOT IT?
NORMALLY, THE DEPARTED EXIST IN ANOTHER PLACE THAN US, BUT TODAY'S A SPECIAL DAY FOR VISITING.
SO YOUR MAMA'S GOTTA BE SOMEWHERE NEAR, TOO, SHIROU.
HUH?!
WHY DON'TCHA TRY CALLIN' OUT FOR HER?
RUMMAGE
RUMMAGE

AGAIN WITH THAT INCENSE?!
GRAB
I TOLDJA BEFORE TO...
?
THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT INCENSE OF YOURS IS A COMPLETE HOAX! TALKIN' ABOUT HOW WHEN YOU LIGHT IT, YOU CAN SEE THE FORM OF A DEPARTED LOVED ONE IN ITS SMOKE...
HEH HEH
I BOUGHT IT FROM SOME OLD WOMAN WHO SAID HER DESCENDENTS WERE ONMYOUJI AND SOOTHSAYERS.
THIS IS THAT VERY SAME EXCELLENT PRODUCT.
HGH, YOUR TYPICAL FISHY TRICKS! YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO OFFLOAD YOUR PHONY MERCHANDISE, AIN'TCHA?!
WELL, WHY DON'T WE GIVE IT A TRY?
IT'S NOT A FRAUD!
OKAY, SHIROU?
WAFT

SQUEEZE
CLOSE YOUR EYES...
WE CAN'T SEE THE DEPARTED WITH OUR EYES
THAT'S WHY WE HAVE TO USE OUR HEARTS TO FEEL THEM


SHIROU...

WAAAAH...
IT'S OKAY, IT'S OKAY.
WHAT'S WRONG? MAMA'S RIGHT HERE.
THERE THERE.
WAAAAH!
LILLIUM. WHAT WAS IT, AGAIN?
HE PUT SOMETHING NICE-SMELLING INSIDE IT!
IT HAS A NICE SMELL, HUH?
AAAH!
LOOK, SHIROU!
WHAT COULD IT BE?
WITH THIS, THE THREE OF US CAN ALL BE TOGETHER RIGHT?
MAMMA!
EVEN WHEN HE'S AWAY ON WORK,
SO THIS
IS YOUR FATHER'S SCENT, SHIROU.
ONE OF THE INGREDIENTS FOR HIS MEDICINES.
OOH!
OOH!

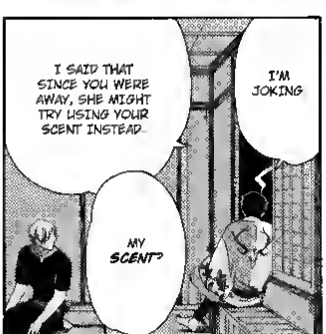
YOU'RE OUR PRECIOUS TREASURE
MINE...
AND TORA'S...
WE'LL ALWAYS BE THINKING OF YOU, SO...
GASP
PAPA! WHY CAN'T WE SEE MAMA?!
SHAKE
WHERE?!
IS MAMA HERE?!
MAMA'S SCENT!
!

WOBBLE
WOBBLE
MAMA WAS THERE!
BUT SHE'S NOT!
WHY?!
SHIROU...
...
I WANNA HUG HER AND BE WITH HER,
AND HOLD HER HAND!
WAAA

BACK THEN,
I HAD A DISCUSSION WITH SHIORI
HUH?
WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM...?
...

...
WELL, I TOLD HER, SINCE YOU WERE MY LITTLE BROTHER, WHY DIDN'T SHE JUST CONSIDER ME AS A NEW FATHER, INSTEAD OF THINKING OF HERSELF AS MY SISTER-IN-LAW, AND SHIROU AS MY NEPHEW?

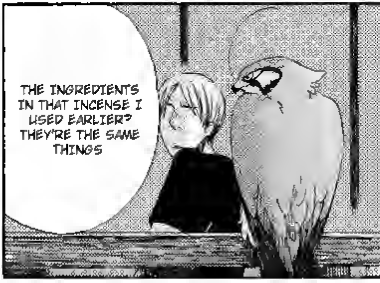
SHE SAID THAT BECAUSE YOU WERE AWAY SO OFTEN SHIROU WOULD CRY WHEN YOU CAME HOME
AND SHE WONDERED WHAT
SHE COULD DO


I'M JOKING
I SAID THAT SINCE YOU WERE AWAY, SHE MIGHT TRY USING YOUR SCENT INSTEAD
MY SCENT?

WELL, TO BE HONEST I MEANT THAT AS A JOKE TOO
BUT I GAVE HER SOME CLOVES OR CINAMMON OR SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT AND SHE PUT THEM INTO A LITTLE SCENT BAG IT SEEMED TO MAKE HER HAPPY
SHE USED IT EVERY TIME SHE ROCKED HIM

YEAH YOU STINK OF MEDICINE, YOU KNOW?
REALLY?!

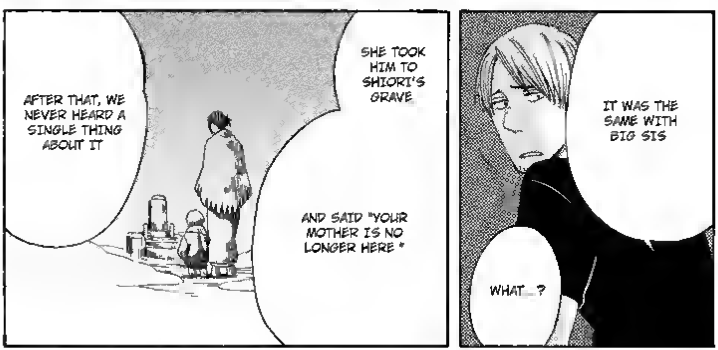
SO WHENEVER SHIROU SMELLS IT,
HE'S BOUND TO SEE MEMORIES OF HIS MOTHER...

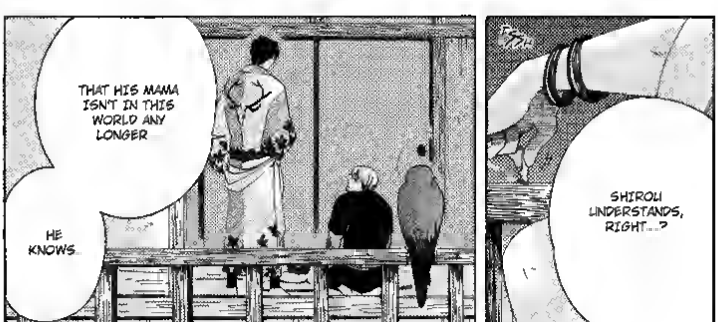

THE INGREDIENTS IN THAT INCENSE I USED EARLIER? THEY'RE THE SAME THINGS

BUT WHY, ALL OF A SUDDEN?

ANYWAY,
I'M SORRY IT SEEMED TO MAKE HIM THINK OF SOMETHING BAD...

FFFFF
I WAS SURE HE UNDERSTOOD WHAT IT MEANT FOR SHIORI TO HAVE DIED...
UP UNTIL NOW, HE'S NEVER SO MUCH AS SAID HE WANTS TO MEET HER


AFTER THAT, WE NEVER HEARD A SINGLE THING ABOUT IT
SHE TOOK HIM TO SHIORI'S GRAVE
AND SAID "YOUR MOTHER IS NO LONGER HERE."
IT WAS THE SAME WITH BIG SIS
WHAT...?


THAT HIS MAMA ISN'T IN THIS WORLD ANY LONGER
HE KNOWS...
SHIROU UNDERSTANDS, RIGHT...?

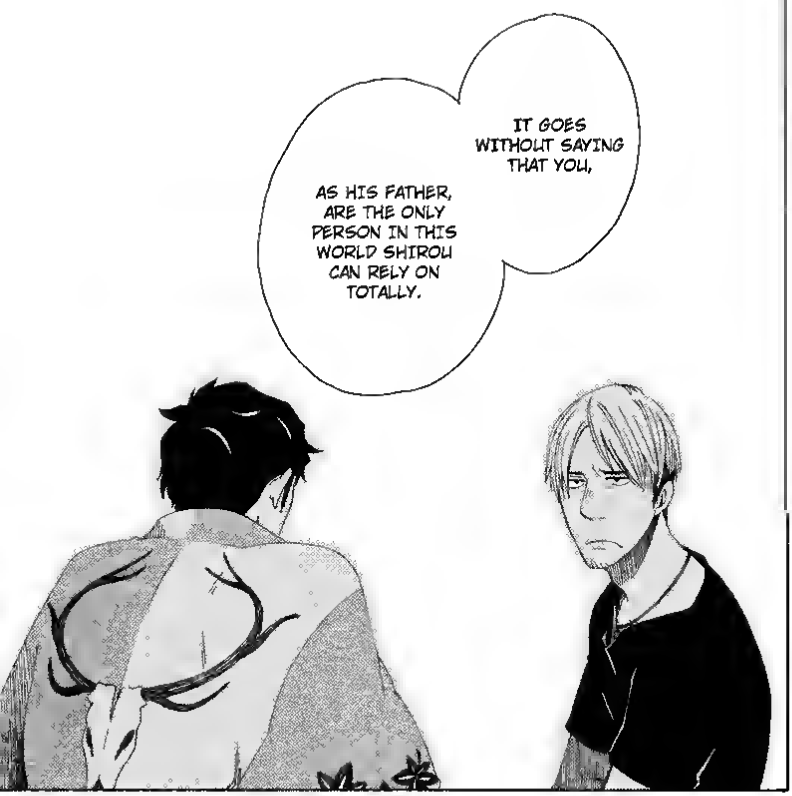
SO IT'S NOT THAT HE DIDN'T TALK ABOUT IT. JUST THAT HE WOULDN'T
WITH ME AND SIS AND THE REST, DEFINITELY...

IT'S JUST THAT HE DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE YOU FEEL SAD

WE BECAME PEOPLE HE COULD TALK TO ABOUT HIS FEELINGS. HUH, SHIROU?
EVENTUALY,

REALLY ARE AN IDIOT, AINTCHA?
YOU...

WHY, JUST ME...?


IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT YOU,
AS HIS FATHER, ARE THE ONLY PERSON IN THIS WORLD SHIROU CAN RELY ON TOTALLY.

THUD
HE'S TRYIN' TO GIVE YOU...
BUT SINCE YOU'RE HIS DAD, HE DOESN'T WANNA MAKE YOU THINK ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT, YA KNOW?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? HEY...
...?
...

HUH?
TOO MUCH.

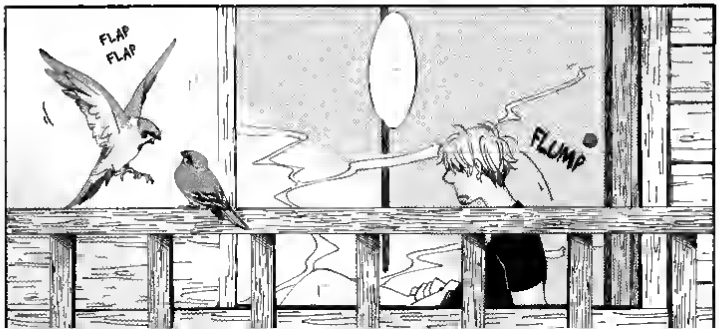
I CAN'T
HOW AM I...
SUPPOSED TO ANSWER HIM...?
EARLIER, TOO...
I COULDN'T...

ZZZZ
ZZZ...
HEY!
WHACK
SAY
A
SINGLE
THING
RUSTLE
...
WHAT THE HELL?!
WHAT THE HELL, HE FELL ASLEEP, THIS OLD MAN?!
I CAME HERE TO TAKE SHIROU BACK TO SIS, BUT
FFFFF
HONESTLY... I THOUGHT HE'D CHANGED, BUT IT WAS JUST MY IMAGINATION.
WHAT'M I SUPPOSED TO DO, SHIORI ?

POKE
MM...?
TORA...
TORA...

SHIROU IS WAITING!
WAKE UP!

SNAP


FLAP FLAP
FLUMP

FLAP FLAP FLAP
SHIROU?
CAW
RUSTLE
THAT BASTARD ...!
?!
HEY! I TOOK YOUR SON BACK WITH ME
- BRO
TAP
WE GOTTA GO GET SHIROU BACK
SWISH
IEJI!
FIND THAT DAMN BROTHER OF MINE!

NOD
IEJI!
HURRY UP ALREADY!
RUSTLE
PFFT
TAP
TAP
TAP
RATTLE

ACTING LIKE HE'S A LOST CHILD.
EVEN THOUGH I DON'T HAVE ANYONE BUT HIM.
AND HE...
DOESN'T HAVE ANYONE BUT ME...!

CHIIIIN
CHIIIIN
CHIIIIN
I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU BEFORE ARE YOU ALONE?
WHERE'S YOUR MAMA?
!
OH?
AAAH, SORRY, SORRY!
DID SHE LOSE SIGHT OF YOU?

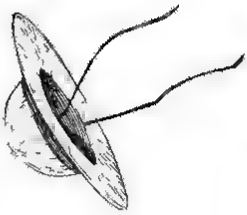
SHIROU?
PIT
HEY...
OH, THAT'S A RELIEF. YOUR PAPA WAS HERE. HUH?
EEEVERYONE'S WAITING FOR YA.
IF YA GO BACK, YOU CAN THINK ABOUT MAMA ALL YOU WANT, AND AUNTIE WON'T MIND
AND PAPA?!
WELL, YOUR PAPA
WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK TO AUNTIE'S WITH OL' KANOEMON?
!

HE MIGHT HAFTA BE AWAY A BIT FOR WORK
HE WAS SO TIRED FROM YESTERDAY HE'S STILL SLEEPING
?!
SO—
SHIO
ISN'T A GOOD KID..?
HUH?
I'M .. SORRY.
UHHHH
HIC
I WON'T... SAY... SELFISH STUFF... WAAH
SO... TO PAPA..
HIC
SHIO SAID SOMETHING SELFISH
DRIP
DRIP
SO PAPA'S TIRED..?

PANT
PANT
DAMN... KANOE...!
YOU...
?!
GAAA-AAH!
WHACK!
?!
FLAP
PANT
MAKING...
MY PRECIOUS ONLY SON
CRY LIKE THAT!
PANT
PANT
AH...
TORAKICHI
SHIROU! LISTEN WELL!

NEED A HUG, YOU COME TO PAPA, ANY TIME!
WHENEVER YOU
AND HOLD MY HAND WHENEVER YOU WANT!
ANY TIME YOU'RE SAD AND NEED TO CRY, YOU CAN COME TO ME!
OKAY?!
...HM!

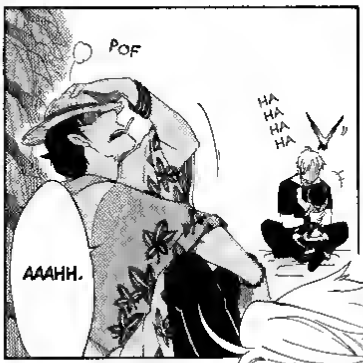
COME HERE!



DON'T... RUN AWAY AGAIN.
SQUEEZE
FROM HERE ON OUT, WHATEVER HAPPENS...
PAPA'S GOING TO MAKE SURE TO PROTECT YOU AND KEEP YOU SMILING... SO...!
MM!

GIGGLE
PAPA, YOU SMELL LIKE MAMA.

HUH?
SHOVE
PAPA!
AH,
SORRY IT'S BECAUSE I CAME HERE SO QUICKLY I DIDN'T...
YOUR BEARD HURTS!


POF
HA HA HA HA
AAAHH.

DID YOU COME TOGETHER?

HONESTLY YA TROUBLESOME FATHER AND CHILD...
WHAT'M I SUPPOSED TO TELL SIS?

FWOOSH
FWOOSH
OH?
HEY, HEY, PAPA, LOOK!
SHIO FOUND SOME CHI-CHIKOGUSA!
YEAH!
YOU BACK FROM GIVING FLOWERS TO M-M...!?
TAP TAP
LINCA KANOEMON SAID IT WAS A REALLY STRONG FLOWER.
HUH?
YOU CAN!
YOU KNOW QUITE A BIT ABOUT FLOWERS, DON'T YOU?
YOU CAN'T EVEN USE THAT ONE FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES, REALLY

HE SAID IF WE HAVE IT, PAPA AND SHIO WILL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER!
END

I REALLY LIKE DRAWING CHILDREN, SO I'M HAPPY TO BE DRAWING THIS MANGA. ALTHOUGH IT DOES MAKE ME FEEL KINDA LIKE A MIDDLE-AGED MAN...

—TAGAWA MI

ちちこぐさ

【父子草】

1

田川ミ

BLADE COMICS

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【父子草】

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田川ミ

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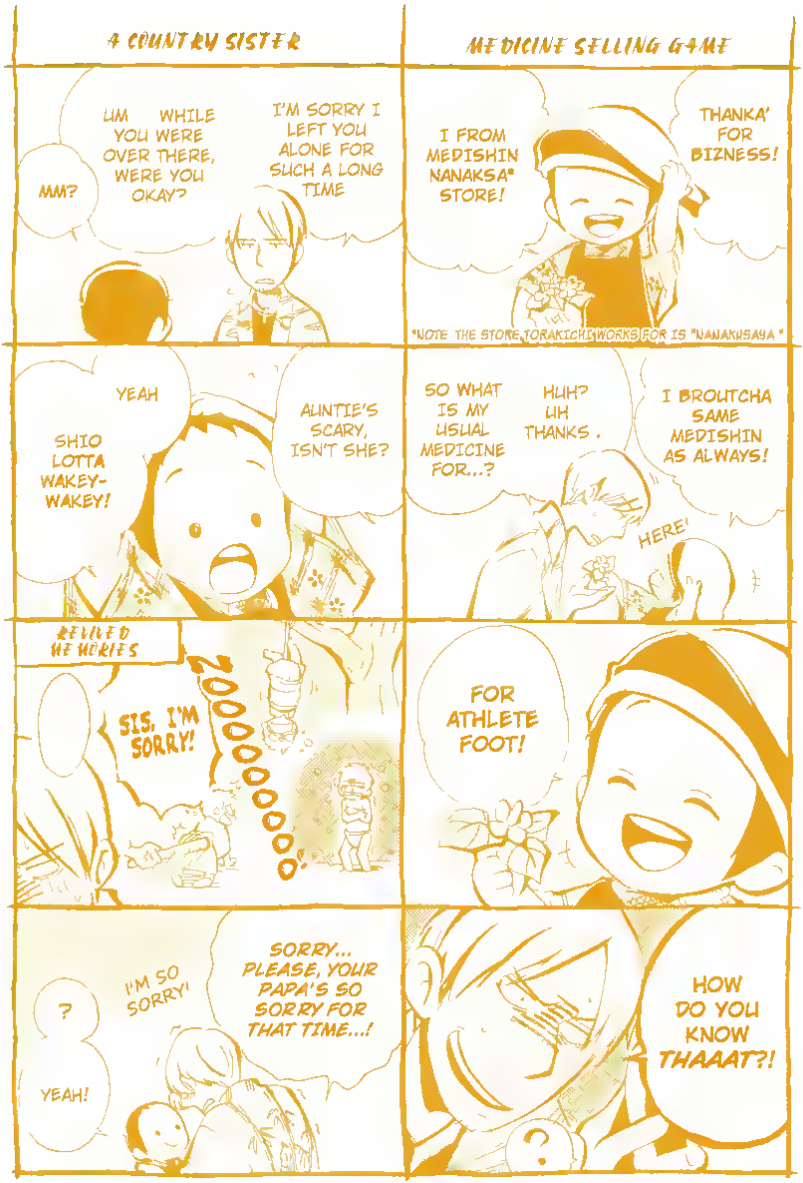
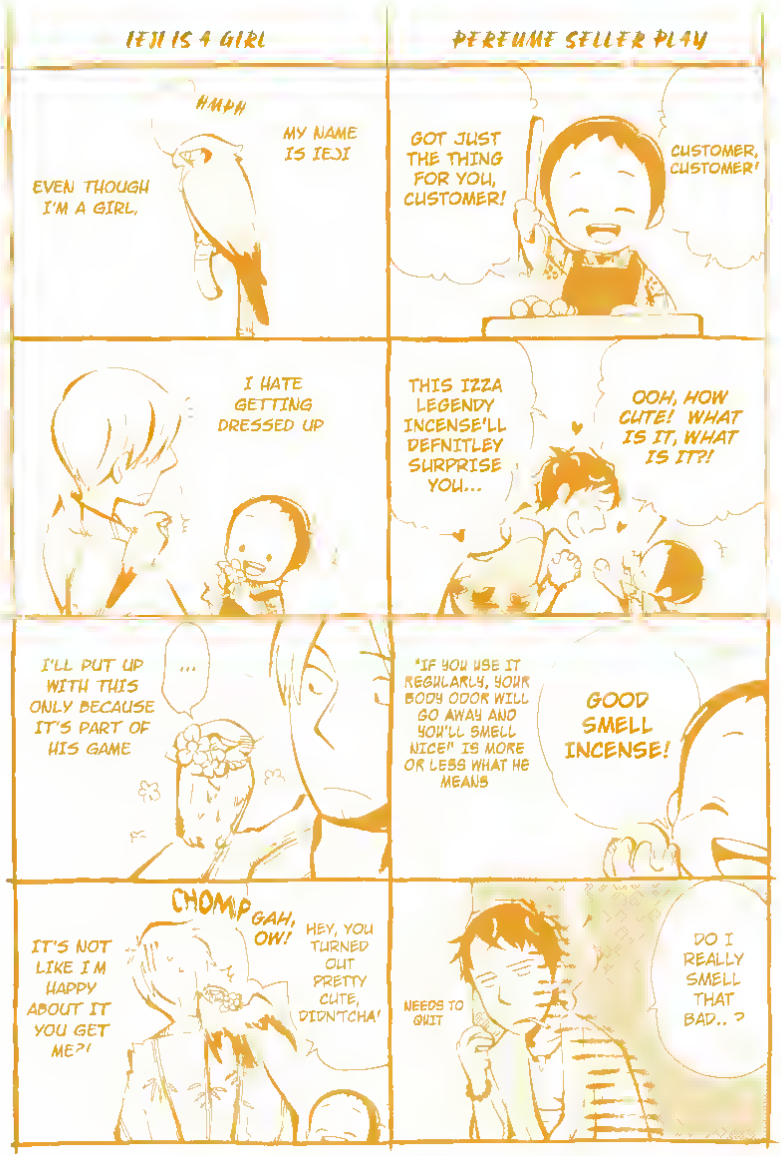

4 COUNTRY SISTER
MM?
UM WHILE YOU WERE OVER THERE, WERE YOU OKAY?
I'M SORRY I LEFT YOU ALONE FOR SUCH A LONG TIME
MEDICINE SELLING GAME
I FROM MEDISHIN NANAKSA* STORE!
THANKA' FOR BIZNESS!
*NOTE THE STORE TORAKICHI WORKS FOR IS "NANAKUSAYA"
YEAH
SHIO LOTTA WAKEY-WAKEY!
AUNTIE'S SCARY, ISN'T SHE?
SO WHAT IS MY USUAL MEDICINE FOR...?
HUH? UH THANKS.
I BROUTCHA SAME MEDISHIN AS ALWAYS!
HERE!
REVIVED MEMORIES
SIS, I'M SORRY!
ZOOOOOOOO
FOR ATHLETE FOOT!
?
YEAH!
I'M SO SORRY!
SORRY... PLEASE, YOUR PAPA'S SO SORRY FOR THAT TIME...!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAAAT?!
?


IEJI IS A GIRL
PERFUME SELLER PLAY
HMPH
MY NAME IS IEJI
EVEN THOUGH I'M A GIRL,
GOT JUST THE THING FOR YOU, CUSTOMER!
CUSTOMER, CUSTOMER!
I HATE GETTING DRESSED UP
THIS IZZA LEGENDY INCENSE'LL DEFNITLEY SURPRISE YOU...
OOH, HOW CUTE! WHAT IS IT, WHAT IS IT?!
I'LL PUT UP WITH THIS ONLY BECAUSE IT'S PART OF HIS GAME
...
"IF YOU USE IT REGULARLY, YOUR BODY ODOR WILL GO AWAY AND YOU'LL SMELL NICE!" IS MORE OR LESS WHAT HE MEANS
GOOD SMELL INCENSE!
CHOMP
GAH, OW!
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M HAPPY ABOUT IT YOU GET ME?!
HEY, YOU TURNED OUT PRETTY CUTE, DIDN'TCHA!
NEEDS TO QUIT
DO I REALLY SMELL THAT BAD..?

Chichikogusa

Extra

BY TAGAWA MI

Antisense Scanslations

Translations/Edit by Thestripedone

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We're currently seeking translators!

E-mail us at Antisense Scans@gmail.com

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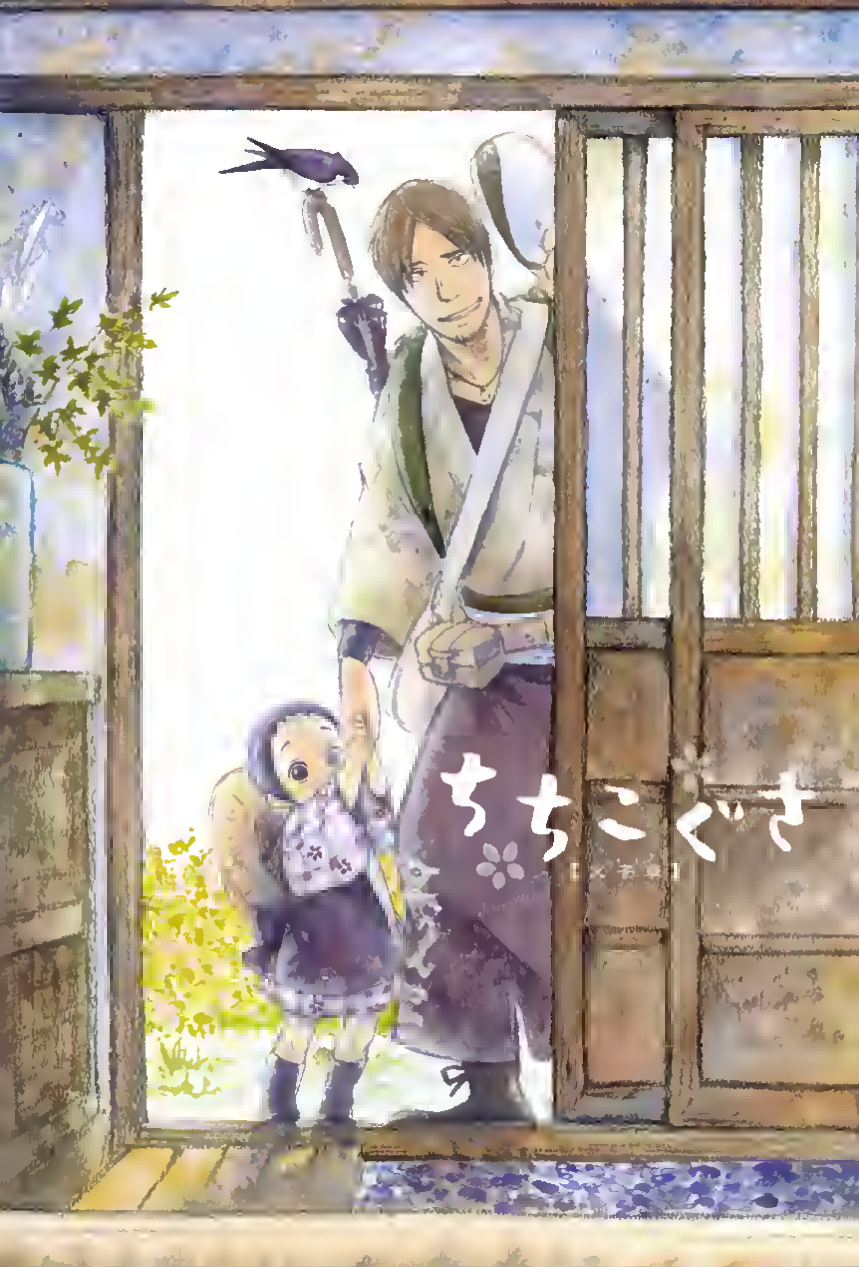
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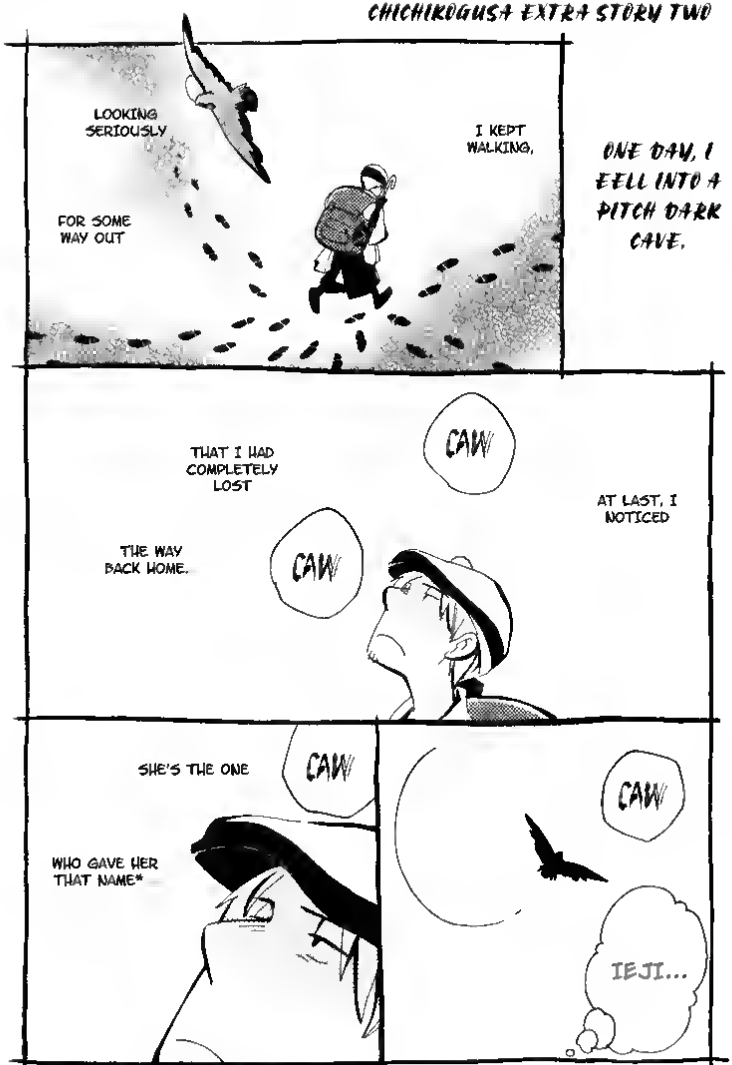
【メヲ草】

CHAPTER 1 ✻ MEDICINE SELLING PARENT AND CHILD
CHAPTER 2 ✻ TRAVEL AND NIGHT-CRYING
CHAPTER 3 ✻ THINKING OF YOU AND NOSEBLEEDS
CHAPTER 4 ✻ THE BEACH AND THE PROMISE
CHAPTER 5 ✻ MEDDLING AT BON
CHAPTER 6 ✻ A FATHER'S LOVE

EVEN WHEN I FINALLY RETURN HOME, I CAN'T SET FOOT IN THE HOUSE.
BECAUSE OF THIS,
MY SON HAS AN EXTREME SHYNESS OF STRANGERS.
AND I MEAN, AM I REALLY...
OF COURSE HE'S NOT GOING TO THINK OF ME AS HIS FATHER
ON TOP OF THAT, I DIDN'T COME HOME FOR BON OR NEW YEAR'S
WELL, AFTER ALL I WASN'T EVEN HERE WHEN HE WAS BORN

EXTRA STORY ONE: END



*FOOTNOTE THE KANJI USED TO WRITE IEJI ARE 家路, OR "HOME" FOLLOWED BY "RETURN"

EXTRA STORY TWO – END

MY NEPHEW HAS NO MOTHER.

HIS FATHER LEFT THE BOY WITH ME, HIS AUNT,

AND HASN'T SPOKEN A PEEP FOR TWO YEARS UNDER THE GUISE OF WORK.

ONCE, I ASKED THE CHILD, "WHY DON'T YOU BECOME AUNTY'S SON?"

BUT HE NEVER RESPONDED.

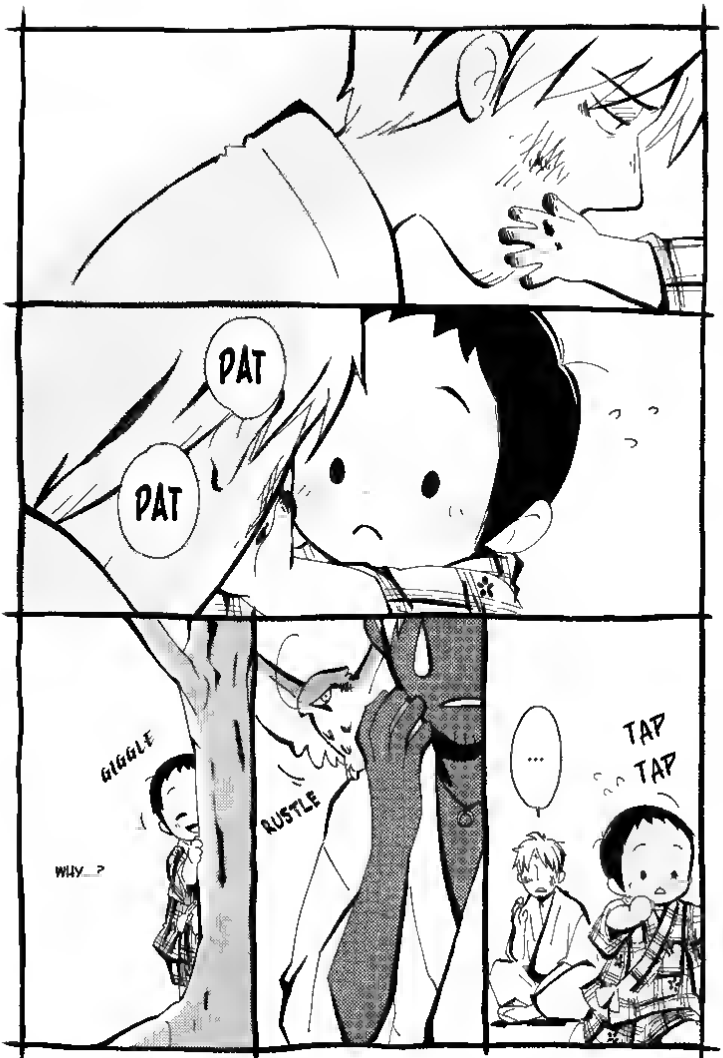
EVERY DAY... EVERY SINGLE DAY... HE TAKES FLOWERS TO HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE.

WITHOUT SO MUCH AS SEEING ME.

EVEN THOUGH IT'S A WOMAN'S KIMONO, IT'S QUITE PLAIN
WHEN SHE WAS ALIVE, THE CHILD'S MOTHER OFTEN WORE THIS.
THAT STUPID BROTHER OF MINE MUST HAVE WANTED TO LOSE THIS LONELY CHILD, TOO, WHEN HE GAVE HIM INTO MY HOUSE.
DON'T MOVE ABOUT!
HEY,
...

EXTRA STORY THREE – END

COMPLETELY
I WAS BEATEN BY MY SISTER.
I HAVE BEEN RUNNING AWAY FROM MY WIFE'S DEATH, AND FROM MY SON.
FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS,
TAP
TAP
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF I'D ENDED UP
DEAD



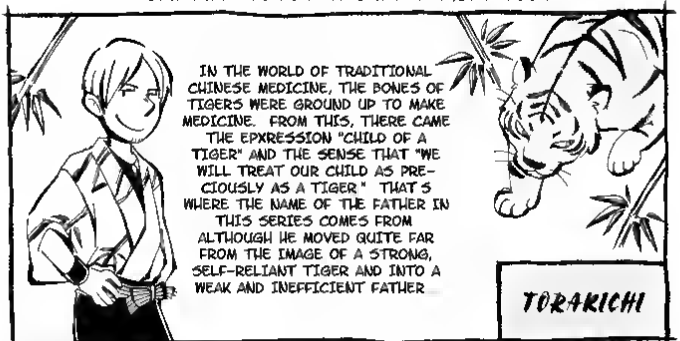
EXTRA STORY FOUR – END

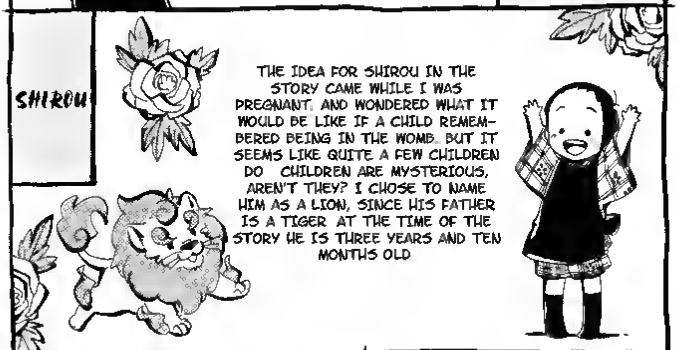
LITTLE SHIROU...
WAAAH
MIC
WAAAH
WHO'S TOTALLY SPOILED
IS A BIG CRY-BABY
WAAAH
MY SISTER-IN-LAW
SAYS TORA WAS THE SAME WAY WHEN HE WAS A KID, ALWAYS CRYING
JUST AS I THOUGHT, THEY REALLY RESEMBLE ONE ANOTHER
SOMETIMES,
TORA'S BROTHER VISITS
AND PLAYS WITH SHIROU

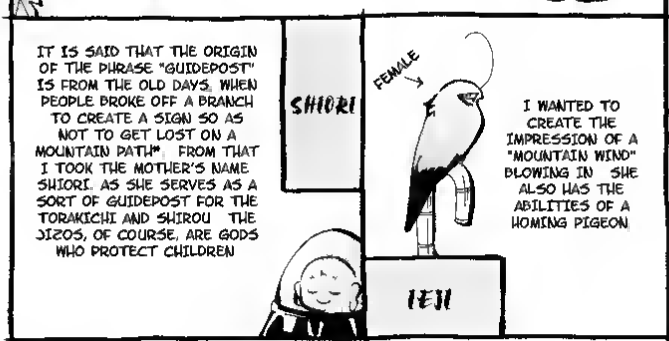
HE'S VERY GOOD WITH CHILDREN,
SO SHIROU ALWAYS HAS A GOOD TIME.
BUT I...
WANT TO SEE HIS FATHER PLAYING AND GETTING ALONG WITH HIM LIKE THAT, TOO

EXTRA STORY FIVE – END

"I USED UP ALL THE PAGES"
EXTRAS TO READ WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED
WITH THE VOLUME AND HAVE FREE TIME.


IN THE WORLD OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE, THE BONES OF TIGERS WERE GROUND UP TO MAKE MEDICINE. FROM THIS, THERE CAME THE EPXRESSION "CHILD OF A TIGER" AND THE SENSE THAT "WE WILL TREAT OUR CHILD AS PRECIOUSLY AS A TIGER." THAT'S WHERE THE NAME OF THE FATHER IN THIS SERIES COMES FROM ALTHOUGH HE MOVED QUITE FAR FROM THE IMAGE OF A STRONG, SELF-RELIANT TIGER AND INTO A WEAK AND INEFFICIENT FATHER
TORAKICHI


SHIROU
THE IDEA FOR SHIROU IN THE STORY CAME WHILE I WAS PREGNANT AND WONDERED WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE IF A CHILD REMEMBERED BEING IN THE WOMB. BUT IT SEEMS LIKE QUITE A FEW CHILDREN DO. CHILDREN ARE MYSTERIOUS, AREN'T THEY? I CHOSE TO NAME HIM AS A LION, SINCE HIS FATHER IS A TIGER. AT THE TIME OF THE STORY HE IS THREE YEARS AND TEN MONTHS OLD


IT IS SAID THAT THE ORIGIN OF THE PHRASE "GUIDEPOST" IS FROM THE OLD DAYS, WHEN PEOPLE BROKE OFF A BRANCH TO CREATE A SIGN SO AS NOT TO GET LOST ON A MOUNTAIN PATH* FROM THAT I TOOK THE MOTHER'S NAME SHIORI. AS SHE SERVES AS A SORT OF GUIDEPOST FOR THE TORAKICHI AND SHIROU. THE JIZOS, OF COURSE, ARE GODS WHO PROTECT CHILDREN
SHIORI
FEMALE
I WANTED TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION OF A "MOUNTAIN WIND" BLOWING IN. SHE ALSO HAS THE ABILITIES OF A HOMING PIGEON
IEJI

*GUIDEPOST, ETC. - THE WORD FOR GUIDEPOST IN JAPANESE IS SHIORI, WHICH IS WRITTEN WITH THE KANJI FOR "BREAK" AND "BRANCH."

CHI-CHIKO-GUSA

CHICHIKOGUSA (FATHER AND CHILD GRASS)
FAMILY ASTERACEAE
SIMILAR TO HAHAKOGUSA (MOTHER AND CHILD GRASS)

THIS LITTLE PLANT POPS UP EVERYWHERE, BUT IT'S SUBDUED AND NOT THAT WELL-KNOWN. IT SEEMS THE NAME COMES FROM HAHAKOGUSA. IN CHINA, THOUGH IT HAS A MUCH COOLER NAME OF 天青地白, WRITTEN WITH THE CHARACTERS FOR HEAVEN, BLUE/GREEN, EARTH, AND WHITE. GENERALLY, IT'S A MEDICINAL HERB. IN THE LANGUAGE OF PLANTS, IT MEANS "A FATHER'S LOVE." HAHAKOGUSA, ON THE OTHER HAND, MEANS "ALWAYS THINKING OF YOU."

MEDICINE SELLERS

THE MODEL FOR MY MEDICINE SELLERS, "TOMOYAMA MEDICINES," IS WELL-KNOWN AND OFTEN USED AS THE BASIS FOR PERIOD DRAMAS.

AT A TIME WHEN EFFECTIVE MEDICINE HAD YET TO SPREAD THROUGHOUT JAPAN, THEY CARRIED IT TO EVERYONE IN AN ATTEMPT TO SUPPORT THEIR GOOD HEALTH.

IT'S EVEN SAID THAT SOME BECAME TRADERS ONLY BECAUSE THEY HAD FAMILY ALL OVER JAPAN. FROM THAT ALONE, IT SEEMS THEY QUICKLY BECAME WELCOMED BY AND RELIED UPON BY A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE. IT WAS A WARM-HEARTED BUSINESS.

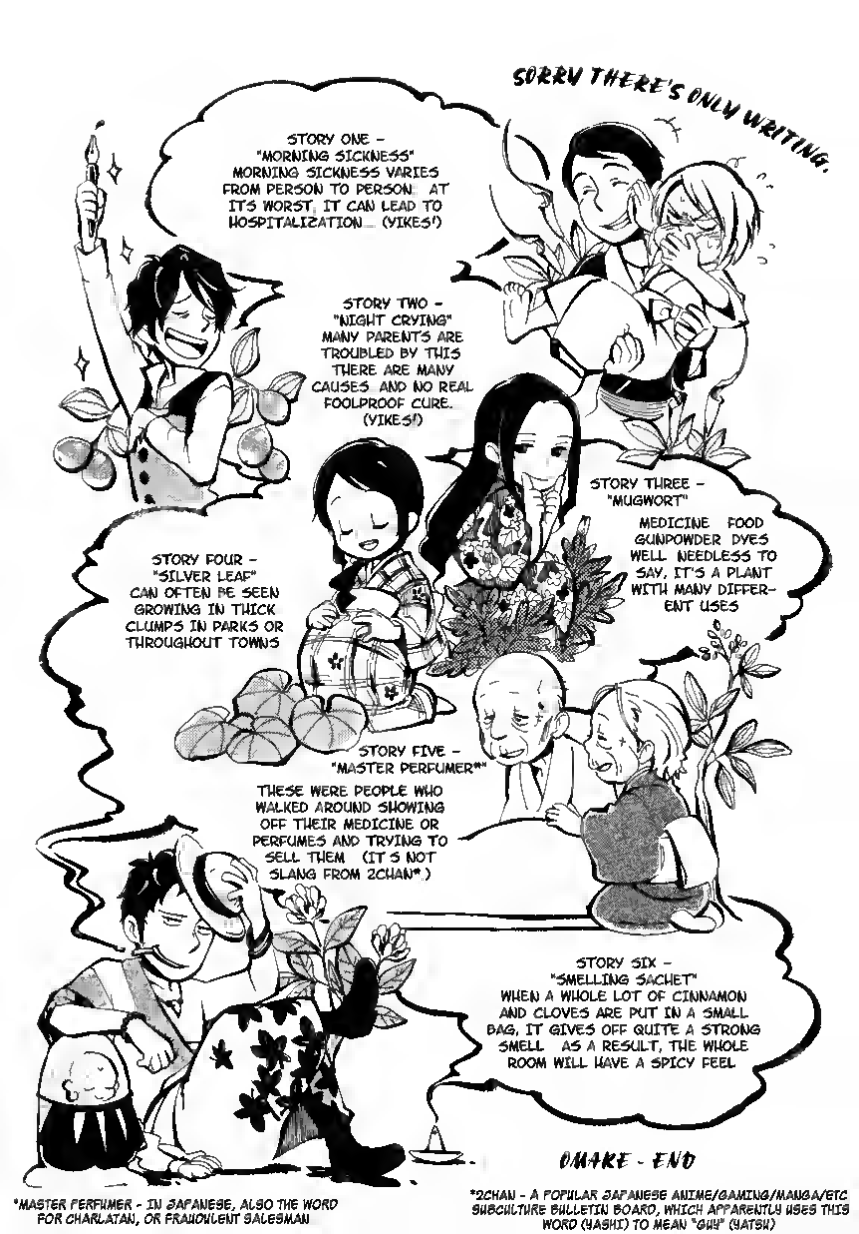
MEDICINAL HERBS

ALL OF THE PLANTS USED IN THIS STORY ARE STILL USED AS MEDICINE TODAY. I HAVE SEEN THEM BLOOMING CLOSE BY EVERY TIME I GO OUT. ALL THESE PLANTS GROWING AND BLOOMING AROUND US WHILE WE IGNORE THEM WERE TREATED IMPORTANTLY BY PEOPLE LONG AGO. IT'S MUCH MORE INTERESTING IF WE PAY ATTENTION A LITTLE BIT, TOO.

HISTORICAL SETTING

THINKING, "AN ERA WHEN MEDICINE SELLERS FLOURISHED," OR "AN ERA WHEN IT WAS FORGIVABLE TO HAVE YOUR CHILD HELP YOU SELL THINGS," I WANTED TO GIVE THIS FANTASY A REALISTIC SETTING. PLEASE EXCUSE ANY IMPOSSIBILITIES OR VIOLATIONS OF JAPAN'S PHARMACEUTICAL LAW.

THERE'S STILL A LITTLE LEFT! →


SORRY THERE'S ONLY WRITING.
STORY ONE -
"MORNING SICKNESS"
MORNING SICKNESS VARIES FROM PERSON TO PERSON. AT ITS WORST, IT CAN LEAD TO HOSPITALIZATION... (YIKES!)
STORY TWO -
"NIGHT CRYING"
MANY PARENTS ARE TROUBLED BY THIS THERE ARE MANY CAUSES AND NO REAL FOOLPROOF CURE. (YIKES!)
STORY THREE -
"MUGWORT"
MEDICINE FOOD GUNPOWDER DYES WELL NEEDLESS TO SAY, IT'S A PLANT WITH MANY DIFFERENT USES
STORY FOUR -
"SILVER LEAF"
CAN OFTEN BE SEEN GROWING IN THICK CLUMPS IN PARKS OR THROUGHOUT TOWNS
STORY FIVE -
"MASTER PERFUMER"*
THESE WERE PEOPLE WHO WALKED AROUND SHOWING OFF THEIR MEDICINE OR PERFUMES AND TRYING TO SELL THEM (IT'S NOT SLANG FROM 2CHAN*)
STORY SIX -
"SMELLING SACHET"
WHEN A WHOLE LOT OF CINNAMON AND CLOVES ARE PUT IN A SMALL BAG, IT GIVES OFF QUITE A STRONG SMELL AS A RESULT, THE WHOLE ROOM WILL HAVE A SPICY FEEL
OMAKE - END

*MASTER PERFUMER - IN JAPANESE, ALSO THE WORD FOR CHARLATAN, OR FRAUDULENT SALESMAN

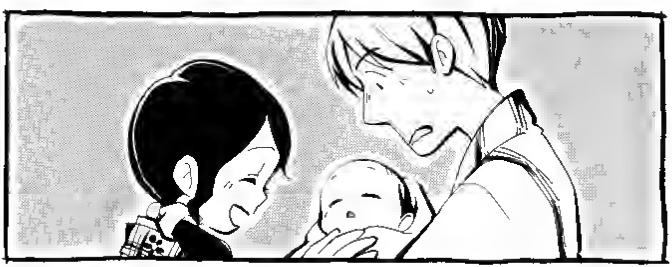
*2CHAN - A POPULAR JAPANESE ANIME/GAMING/MANGA/ETC SUBCULTURE BULLETIN BOARD, WHICH APPARENTLY USES THIS WORD (YASHI) TO MEAN "GAY" (YATSU)

CHICHIKOGUSA - AFTERWORD

HELLO! PLEASED TO MEET YOU, I'M TAGAWA MI. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR BUYING MY FIRST PUBLISHED COMIC VOLUME, "CHICHIKOGUSA." DID YOU FIND IT ENJOYABLE...?

THIS STORY IS ONE I'VE HAD IN MY HEAD SINCE I WAS TEN YEARS OLD AND HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO TELL. IT'S AAAAAALWAYS BEEN A DREAM OF MINE.

BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS A PARENT MYSELF, GIVING BIRTH TO MY OWN DAUGHTER. THINKING ABOUT IT, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT I WAS ONLY ABLE TO WRITE THIS STORY BECAUSE I AM NOW A PARENT.



I'M VERY GRATEFUL TO MY PUBLISHERS FOR LETTING ME PUT FORM TO THIS STORY AND SENDING IT OUT, AND OF COURSE MORE THAN ANYTHING, TO ALL OF MY READERS! ANYWAY! I HOPE WITH ALL MY HEART TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SO... THANK YOU VERY VERY MUCH FOR READING ALL OF THIS!

TAGAWA MI

TO MY EVER-PATIENT FAMILY: I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WRITE THIS STORY WITHOUT YOU. THANK YOU SO MUCH!

BLADE COMICS

ちちこぐさ ①

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